

PRESENT TRUTH

GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD
AND PREACH THE GOSPEL

HOLY BIBLE

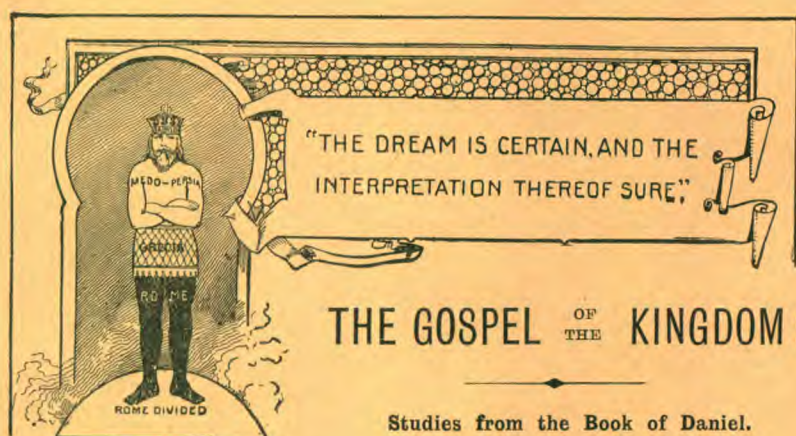
THE WORD IS TRUTH

SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH

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NO. 9.



THE KINGDOM WHICH WILL STAND FOR EVER.

(Daniel ii. 31-49.)

WITHOUT any hesitation, or doubt as to the correctness of the revelation which had been made to him, Daniel related to the king his dream :

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee ; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors ; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them ; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

It is no wonder that this dream made a wonderful impression upon the mind of Nebuchadnezzar. It was certainly a most striking sight. The image was "great," there was an outward splendour or glory that was "excellent," and its aspect was

"terrible." And it "stood" there before him with every outward indication that it might continue to stand. But it was struck upon the feet (not upon the head) by a stone "which was not in hands" (margin), and suddenly it all went to utter destruction "together," and the wind carried away the dust. Not even a remnant was left to remind one of its former greatness, but the stone which did the smiting became greater than the image. It is not surprising that Nebuchadnezzar said, "My spirit was troubled to know the dream." What could be the meaning of a sight so remarkable? Daniel had informed the king that "He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass," and he had promised that he would "show the king the interpretation." His statement and his promise are now made good.

INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM.

"This is the dream ; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings : for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom,

power, and strength and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold."

A crisis had come in the lives of both Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel. The former was to hear the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and the latter had the privilege of proclaiming it to him. If the preacher is faithful, and his message is received, great results will follow. And what is the message? The same "Gospel of the kingdom" which is to be "preached in all the world for a witness:" "Behold your God!" "They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy power ; to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."

Nebuchadnezzar was "a king of kings," that "all nations shall serve him," but there is a king greater than he, and a dominion of wider extent. "The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King." "His kingdom ruleth over all." This is the truth which is to be made known to Nebuchadnezzar, and so Daniel testified to the king that it was the "God of heaven" who had given to him the "kingdom, power, strength, and glory" which he enjoyed, and who had bestowed upon him the greatest dominion held by any man since the original dominion was given to Adam. How great is the One who can give such gifts as these! "It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers." And Nebuchadnezzar must learn that even "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees's excellency" will pass away.

TEMPORARY KINGDOM'S.

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth."

Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was not to stand for ever. There was to be "another," and then "another." And not only so, but the one which succeeded his was to be "inferior." "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!" The very metals which formed the different parts of the image told the story of future degeneracy. Gold, silver, brass, iron, clay: each one is "inferior" to the preceding one. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." It is character, not outward splendour, which counts in His estimate of real worth. "Righteousness exalteth a nation."

THE FOURTH AND LAST EARTHLY WORLD EMPIRE.

"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

The meaning of the image is now made clear. It was to reveal an outline history of the kingdoms of the world, and the truth that they would all pass away. There were to be four universal kingdoms, no more and no less. The first was distinctly stated to be the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon; the others are not mentioned by name, because it was the character of the kingdoms, and not their names, which was of importance. It was the life of the history, rather than the mere skeleton, to which the attention was to be directed. But we know from the other prophecies in this same book, and from the historical records, that the second kingdom was Medo-Persia, the third Grecia (Ch. 8: 3-5, 20, 21), and the fourth Rome.

It is worth while to note in passing that the second and third kingdoms are merely mentioned so as to make the connection

between the first and the fourth, Babylon and Rome, and that more details are given concerning the fourth kingdom than the first. God was making known to the king, and by the record is making known to us, "what shall be in the *latter* days," and it is evident that the fourth and last of these earthly kingdoms holds the most important place in His view of earthly history. Those, therefore, who wish to learn the lessons which the Lord would teach in the world's history will accept His estimate of the most important period, and will give the most study to the fourth kingdom.

The character of this fourth kingdom is plainly set forth. It is "strong as iron," even as it is known in history as the "iron monarchy of Rome," but it uses its strength to "break in pieces and bruise." It is not the mere possession of power by an individual or by a nation, which determines its standing in God's sight, but it is the use made of that power. He who is the Almighty uses His power to help the needy, to restore the fallen, to save the lost. Satan, the adversary, uses his power to hurt, to tear down, to destroy.

A DIVIDED KINGDOM.

It is also declared of this fourth kingdom that it "shall be divided." This reveals the fact that it will not be an everlasting kingdom, for "every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." The effort to impart strength and stability to this kingdom by royal alliances, as "they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men," is no more successful than the effort to mix iron and clay. Strength is not found in cleaving to men. That union which is merely outward, and is dictated simply by self-interest, will not stand the strain of changed and trying circumstances. It is only that love which "endureth all things," love as the life, binding hearts together, which will bring permanent union and strength. This is the experience of the kingdom of God within, and the law of the kingdom is the life of love, and the love which is life. By this means divisions are either prevented or are healed, and those who are far off "are made nigh in the blood (the life) of Christ. For He is our peace who hath made both (or two) one."

But the interpretation is not completed yet. It has been shown that none of these four kingdoms will endure; what is to happen next?

"And in the days of these kings shall the

God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

The secret is now made known to Nebuchadnezzar. His false view of the course of history has been corrected. The kingdom of Babylon will not endure for ever. "The things which are seen are temporal." "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets," and He who is thus making Himself known to Nebuchadnezzar is the only King whose kingdom "shall stand for ever." And this kingdom is not set up by a gradual process of absorbing the fourth kingdom, for "it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms." The stone "smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces." "Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Ps. ii. 6-9.

It is "all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" rather than the men themselves, against which "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven." Through the working of the power of the Gospel, God is able to set up His kingdom within man, separating this "ungodliness and unrighteousness" from him, so that when "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven" against them, the man is not destroyed. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." But those who reject the Gospel of the kingdom reject "the law of the Spirit of life," and make themselves the objects of the wrath. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

WHERE WE ARE LIVING.

We are living "in the days of these kings," in the divided state of the fourth kingdom; and from the fulfilment of many signs and prophecies we know that the time is just at hand when all earthly king-

doms will pass away, and the God of heaven shall set up His kingdom in their place. This will be consummated "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, and to be admired in all them that believe . . . in that day. 2 Thess. ii. 7-10.

The preparation for that greatest event of the ages consists in receiving the Gospel of the kingdom of God, in recognising and accepting in our lives the truth that God is "above all, and through all, and in all," and that "all flesh is grass . . . but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Being thus identified with "the eternal God," and becoming "heirs of God," "children of the kingdom," when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat," and when "the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up," we "shall dwell with the everlasting fire," we "shall dwell with everlasting burnings," we "shall see the King in His beauty.

"O that all might listen to "the voice" that is now sounding throughout all the earth, "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His Judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." By this message a people is to be gathered out from "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, "whose citizenship is in heaven," who are "strangers and pilgrims on the earth," who "declare plainly that they seek a country," and who will be citizens of that kingdom which "shall stand for ever." "And the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

A ROYAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

"Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. The king answered unto Daniel and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret. Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs

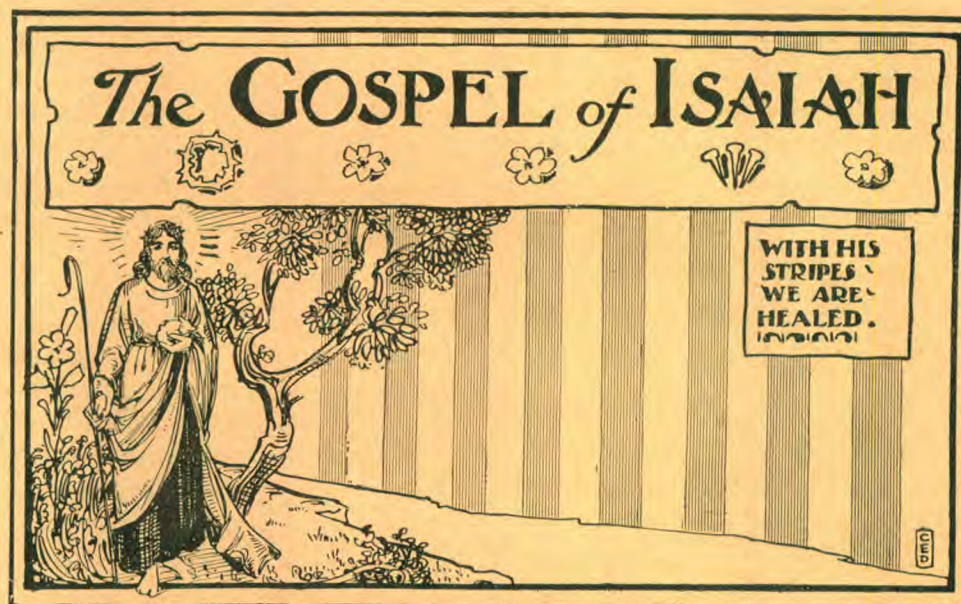
of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king."

Although Daniel was a captive, and Nebuchadnezzar sat upon the throne, yet Nebuchadnezzar recognised Daniel as a greater man than he was. It was his acquaintance with God, that made him great. It was his acceptance of the principles of the kingdom of God, which had made him ruler over himself and over Babylon within, and now these kingly qualities were recognised. His ability to tell the dream and the interpretation, showed that he was chief "over all the wise men of Babylon," and the king simply gave to him the position which belonged to him. Faithfulness to principle, and loyalty to the King of heaven, made Daniel and his companions truly great. They did and taught the com-

mandments of God, and so they were "called great in the kingdom of heaven;" therefore in order that the Gospel of true greatness might be preached to all the people, they were given the place which really belonged to them "over the affairs of the province," and "in the gate of the king." And as Babylon was then a universal kingdom, so the experiences of these Hebrew captives preached the Gospel of the kingdom "in all the world for a witness unto all nations." And in these last days the same devotion to principle is needed in order that the same work may be accomplished, and the setting up of the kingdom of God may be hastened.

"Dare to be a Daniel! dare to stand alone!

Dare to have a purpose firm! dare to make it known." W. W. PRESCOTT.



EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS OUR SALVATION.

(Isa. li. 1-8)

(LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. "HEARKEN unto Me, ye that pursue righteousness,
Ye that seek Jehovah.
Look unto the rock from whence ye were hewn;
And to the hollow of the cave, whence ye were digged.
2. Look unto Abraham your father;
And unto Sarah who bore you:
For I called him being a single person,
And I blessed him, and I multiplied him.
3. Thus therefore shall Jehovah console Sion;
He shall console all her desolations;
And He shall make her wilderness like Eden;
And her desert like the garden of Jehovah;
Joy and gladness shall be found in her;
Thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.
4. Attend unto Me, O ye peoples;

And give ear unto Me, O ye nations;
For the law from Me shall proceed;

And My judgment will I cause to break forth
for a light to the peoples.

5. My righteousness is at hand; My salvation
goeth forth;
And Mine arm shall dispense judgment to the
peoples;
Me the distant lands shall expect;
And to Mine arm shall they look with confidence.

6. Lift up unto the heavens your eyes;
And look down unto the earth beneath;
Verily the heavens shall dissolve, like smoke;
And the earth shall wax old, like a garment;
And its inhabitants shall perish, like the
vilest insect;
But My salvation shall endure for ever;
And My righteousness shall not decay.

7. Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness;
The people in whose heart is My law;
Fear not the reproach of wretched man;
Neither be ye borne down by their revilings.
8. For the moth shall consume them, like a garment;

And the worm shall eat them like wool;
But My righteousness shall endure for ever;
And My salvation to the age of ages."

THE reader cannot fail to notice the difference between Lowth's translation and the ordinary rendering of verse 6, and some may wonder what warrant there can be for so much difference, and how we can be sure of anything when translators differ so widely. What similarity can there be between "in like manner" and "like the vilest insect?" The matter is easily explained. It is well known that in our own language there are many instances of words spelled alike, yet having entirely different meanings. We have no difficulty with them, because the connection always tells us which meaning is intended. Even so it is in the Hebrew. The word for "thus" or "so" is spelled the same as that for "gnat" or "fly." All other translations of which the writer has any knowledge, read, "the inhabitants shall die like gnats," and this rendering is suggested in the margin of the Revised Version of the English. A moment's thought is sufficient to show anybody that "like gnats" is much more striking than "as so," which our translators preferred, and that it is evidently what the Lord really says. It is not a vital matter, but is worthy of note.

ABRAHAM AN EXAMPLE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

HERE we have a call direct to those who would follow the Lord,—to those who seek righteousness. There are many who are seeking it in the wrong way. "Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." Rom. ix. 31, 32. We are therefore directed to Abraham, for an example of how righteousness is obtained. "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Rom. iv. 2-7.

"THE Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith." Abraham was a Gentile, brought up a heathen. See Joshua xxiv. 2, 3, where we have almost the exact language as in our lesson in Isaiah. He was but one, yet God gave him a numerous posterity through faith, for "if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. iii. 29. Look to him, and learn the power of faith. Learn how God can work against all human probabilities. Look also to Sarah, who by faith "received power to conceive seed when she was past age, since she counted Him faithful that promised." Heb. xi. 11. "Thus therefore shall Jehovah console Sion." In that way, and by that means, will God build up and restore Jerusalem; by the preaching of the Gospel among all nations, will God from among the Gentiles raise up a faithful seed to inherit the land of promise, even as He raised up Abraham in the first place. And herein is comfort for the individual, for it matters not how lonely and weak a man may be, God is able to multiply him and make him great.

THE MERCY OF GOD'S JUSTICE.

IT is common for people to look upon the law of God with dread. They regard it as a terrible thing, the instrument only of wrath. That depends wholly upon how they receive it. Out of Christ, it is but an instrument of death, but if we receive it in Christ, it is "the law of the Spirit of life." The throne of grace, to which we are invited to come with boldness, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Heb. iv. 16), is the very same throne out of which proceed "lightnings, and thunders, and voices." Rev. iv. 5. But we must not forget that it was even so at the cross, where we look for salvation. All the terrors of Sinai were there, yet it is from the cross that all our comfort comes. And the cross was the throne of God, having God's law as its basis, with the stream of life flowing from it. The law is not opposed to the Gospel, and does not even have to be reconciled with it; but the law of God in Christ is the Gospel. Justice does not have to give way to mercy, nor even to be blended with it; but it is the justice of God that justifies the ungodly. Rom. iii. 24-26.

"There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice,
That is more than liberty.

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

But God's heart is just, for God Himself is just. Therefore because God is just, and His law is His own life, people will learn to trust and hope in it, and will walk in the light of it. God's law is to be loved and delighted in, instead of to be feared and rejected. God's law is salvation to every one who accepts it in Christ.

GOD says, "My righteousness is near." Yes, for God Himself is "not far from every one of us," and He is our righteousness. Christ is of God made unto us righteousness and sanctification and redemption. His righteousness is near, and His salvation has gone forth. His life is righteousness and salvation, and it has been given freely for all. The gift has been bestowed, and we have not even to ask for it, but only to take it. What a blessed thing it is to know that we may trust on the arm of Jehovah! "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

GOD'S LAW EVERLASTING.

"HEAVEN and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away," says Christ. Matt. xxiv. 35. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matt. v. 17, 18. "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke xvi. 17. Everything that can be shaken will be removed; but God's law will stand for ever; it is unchangeable, for it is God's own righteousness, and He is "from everlasting to everlasting." It is the expression of God's will (Rom. ii. 17, 18), therefore "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 1 John ii. 17.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS THE LAW.

THAT God's righteousness is His law, is seen from verse 7. God says, "Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law." That is to say, the people who know righteousness are the people in whose heart God's law is. If this were the only statement of the kind in the Bible, it would be sufficient to show that there can be no righteousness where the law of God is not; but it must

be there by faith; for this perfect righteousness of the law is found only in Christ, and He dwells in the heart by faith.

This verse shows another thing also, and that is that no one can know the law except by experience. It is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness. One may be able to repeat the commandments as glibly as he can the alphabet, he may discourse beautifully about "the plan of salvation," but he knows nothing of God or His righteous law unless he has experienced the power of His salvation. We know what we have lived, and nothing more. All the rest we have merely heard about.

"Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth." Ps. cxix. 142. It is the law of God, therefore, that is to be the shield and buckler of God's people in the time of trouble. See Ps. xci. 4. The law of God will be the defence of His people. It is the one enduring thing, therefore we are exhorted, "fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool." Why then should anybody be afraid of the reproaches of men? They have all fallen on Christ, and He has deprived them of all their sting. It is no shame to be reproached with Him. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." 1 Peter iv. 14. Ancient Egypt was a wonderfully rich country, and Moses was well acquainted with it; for he had been brought up at the court; yet he esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Heb. xi. 26. If the reproach of Christ is so wondrously rich in blessing, what must the unveiled glory be?

REVIEW these verses, and note how much stress is laid upon the fact that God's righteousness and salvation are for ever; they cannot be abolished. This constitutes all our hope. Many professed Christians seem to think that it is their duty as ministers of the Gospel to teach people to disregard the law of God. They forget that in so doing they are ranging themselves with the heathen, who vainly say, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." At all such feeble efforts as these God will laugh. And we should laugh also, for in the stability of God's law is our salvation. If God's law could be abolished, that would

show that His Government is weak, and that He is not able to protect those who put their trust in Him. Therefore we may say, "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage," and also, "O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day." And well it may be, for God's commandment is "exceeding broad," and contains more than the mind of man can fathom even in the ages of eternity. If we long for God's salvation, He will open our eyes, that we may behold wonderful things out of His law.

SALVATION THAT LASTS.

"My salvation shall be for ever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished." Remember this; it will help you all your life through. When you are inclined to doubt if you can endure unto the end, and you think that sin and sickness must necessarily overtake you once in a while, recall these words of the Lord. His righteousness is an everlasting righteousness; it cannot be abolished. His salvation, the health and strength of body and soul, that he gives, is for ever. You are well to-day; is it an accident? or is your health from God? From God undoubtedly. Well, then, since He has given you health to-day, can He not continue it indefinitely? You say that He can if He will. Well, do you think that He wishes anything else than that you should be well? The leper said, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean;" and Jesus said, "I will." He has said through His beloved disciple, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper, and be in health." 3 John 2. Be sure, then, that the Lord does not wish that you should be ill. It is no credit to Him to have His children in poor health. If then He wishes you to be well, what can hinder it? You say, and rightly, too, that your ignorance of the laws of health will hinder it. So it is really an accident that you are well to-day; because you have accidentally come into harmony with the law of your being. But Christ is the law of your being, and for you to say that you do not know the laws of life, is the same as saying that you do not know the Lord. Then get acquainted with Him. Study His life as revealed in all creation, and learn how to come into harmony with it. Then that which happens once in a while accidentally, will be the rule. And likewise with your soul. The life that keeps you from the power of the devil to-day, will, if yielded to intelligently, keep you every day, even through eternity. "His

Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." 2 Peter i. 3. So "the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

THE REALITY OF FORGIVENESS.

THE PARALYTIC HEALED.

(Mark ii. 1-12.)*

IN studying this lesson, no one should fail to compare the parallel passages in Matt. ix. 1-8 and Luke v. 17-26. In these accounts of the miracle a few items are recorded, that are not found in Mark, which add materially to the lesson.

THE STORY.

THE story is very quickly told, and very easily learned. Jesus had returned to Capernaum, and had entered the house where He was accustomed to stay when He was in the city. It was quickly noised abroad that He was at home, and soon the house was filled to overflowing with people anxious to hear Him speak, and a great crowd gathered round the door, eager to get within the sound of His voice. These people were not alone from the town, but "there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee and Judea, and Jerusalem." Luke v. 17. So we see that "this thing was not done in a corner." "The redemption that is in Christ Jesus" was that day made known throughout all the land.

"The power of the Lord was present to heal." Whether any of those who were sitting by availed themselves of this opportunity to be healed, or not, we are not told; but there were some who were determined not to let the chance go by. While Jesus was teaching, four men came bearing a fifth on a stretcher, seeking to get near to Him. The fifth man was a paralytic, utterly unable to help himself. But the crowd about the door was impenetrable, and no one would move, to give place to the new-comer. The faith of the five, however, was not dampened; mounting with difficulty to the flat roof of the house, they tore off the tiles, and let

* International Sunday-School Lesson, March 11.

the man down directly in front of Jesus. They were bound to attract His attention, and would not be thwarted. Such faith could not be ignored, even if the compassionate heart of Jesus had not been moved by the sight of the suffering. To the palsied man He said, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Then, when those sitting by began to murmur, and to talk about blasphemy, Jesus asked them which they thought was easier, To forgive the man's sins, or to make him arise. and walk. Without waiting for an answer, he turned again to the man, still lying on his couch, and said, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." Immediately the palsied man arose, took up his bed, and went his way glorifying God, while the people said, "We have seen strange things to-day, the like of which we never saw before," and they glorified God, who had given such authority to man. That is the whole story; what lessons may we learn from it?

MAN'S CHIEF NEED.

THE first thing that is every man's chief need, no matter what his condition, is forgiveness of sins. The Lord always does the most important thing first, and the first thing He did for this man was to make known to him the forgiveness of his sins. This is man's chief need, for, as we shall see, it includes everything else. "Sin came into the world, and death by sin." As sin has brought every misery and woe with it, the remission of sins removes every other ill.

We learn also that the palsied man was more troubled over his sinful condition than over his illness of body. Read the words of the Lord: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." This shows that the man was sad and despondent, and that his sadness was over his sins. All that was needed to make him of good cheer, in spite of his helpless condition, was to know that his sins were forgiven. The words of Jesus brought peace to the troubled heart, and the man felt that now he could be content to die. He had wished for healing, that he might "live a different life." How many have longed for "another chance," not knowing that without a new life from the Lord they could not live any different life from that which they have been living. But now the man's sins were forgiven; the words announcing the fact came with such positive assurance that he could not doubt it.

He believed, and was at peace, for "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

TWO KINDS OF WISDOM CONTRASTED.

WHILE the paralytic himself believed, the others doubted. If they had not, they too might have been healed, for the power of God was present to heal them before this man appeared on the scene. Here we have true and false wisdom contrasted. The poor, sick man believed the words of Jesus, and he knew that he was forgiven; he had positive assurance of the fact; there was a power—the power of the Spirit—that came into him, and and he needed not that any man should testify to him concerning Christ. He knew that He was the Son of God, the Son of man, with power on earth to forgive sins. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." 1 John v. 10. But the wise men sitting by began to "reason" in their hearts. In their minds the thing was not reasonable, and they would not believe it. Note especially that their "reasoning" consisted in doubting. That is the wisdom of this world, and it leads to blindness, ignorance, and folly. We have here the same word that is used in Rom. i. 21, "knowing God, they glorified Him not as God, but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened." Human reasoning leads to ignorance of God, and that is the worst kind of foolishness. It is lack of sense, for God is so plainly revealed in His works that whoever does not recognise Him is a fool, with less perception than the dumb brutes. Simple faith is the highest sort of wisdom. The unlettered man who has learned to recognise God, and who believes in Him, has more wisdom than the most scholarly infidel. This does not by any means disparage learning; on the contrary, it exalts it; for the man who believes the Lord, and who follows Him, has the key to "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," while the wisdom of this world shall "come to naught;" for it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." 1 Cor. i. 19. But the Lord will never destroy anything that has in it real worth.

BEWARE OF THE GOSPEL OF DOUBT.

ABOVE all things beware of a negative Gospel, which is no Gospel at all. There are many people who seem to have no

other message than to warn the people against some other person's supposed errors. Their preaching is always negative. They have nothing themselves to give, that will build up and set free, and they devote a large portion of their time picking flaws in what some other person has said. Their talk always tends to unsettle. After hearing them, people say, "Well I declare, I don't know what to believe." Not always, however; some, like the palsied man, believe in spite of the reason that consists in doubting. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; doubt finds no place in it; we are not even to spend time doubting the teachings of the enemy of souls, but to meet everything with a positive, "It is written." Nobody ever saw a doubting man joyful in the Lord. Don't talk doubts; don't tell what you do not believe; speak always the words of faith.

"He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." The palsied man needed no demonstration to prove to him that his sins were forgiven; but Jesus would show the doubters the foolishness of their "reasonings." He who forgives sins also heals disease. The man could tell by the witness in himself that he was forgiven, but there was no outward sign to indicate the fact to those who sat by. So in order that they might know that the Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins, He said to the palsied man, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." Immediately the man did so, and went forth healed in body as well as in soul, while the wise reasoners were left in confusion.

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS.

LEARN from this narrative that there is real power accompanying the forgiveness of sins. That power is "the power of an endless life," by which Jesus is High Priest. He puts His own life of righteousness into and upon all them that believe, and that sends away the old life of sin, which was death. When we forgive a man who has done wrong, it makes no difference in him; we are to forgive him, not for his benefit, but for our own. If we refuse to forgive an offender, he is not injured by it, but we are. We forgive a man, not to clear him from guilt, but to clear ourselves; for if we refuse to forgive him, we take upon ourselves his sin, and become responsible for it. But

God forgives a man, for the purpose of cleansing him of the guilt. God's forgiveness does not consist in empty words, but it makes the man perfectly free from sin. It does not consist in simply taking no account of the outward acts that the man has done, but it removes the sinful nature. It makes the sinner a partaker of the Divine nature. This Divine nature is the life of God in Christ, so that with it comes healing of body to every one who can discern the life as it is manifested. Those who disparage a justified life, and say that while it is very well to live such a life, there is something far higher, cast discredit upon the righteousness of God, by which forgiveness comes. They simply do not know the power that there is in "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," by which we are justified. True, many people live a sort of Christian life for years, without knowing the real joy of freedom from sin, but that is not the fault of the justification which God imparts, but the fault of their own blindness. They have not known the gift of God. In the forgiveness of sins, we have every gift that a gracious God can impart to a fallen race. We are justified by the faith of Jesus Christ (Gal. ii. 16), even by Christ Himself; and in giving us Christ, God must of necessity give us all things.

THE SIGN OF FORGIVENESS.

Nor the sign to the one forgiven, for he needs no sign. The fact is sufficient for him. But God gives a sign, by which others may know that He does forgive sin, so that they too may be induced to trust in His salvation. What this sign is, we learn from the lesson before us. Jesus told the man to rise up and walk, in order that those sitting by might know that the Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins. The healing of disease in the body of the one whose sins are forgiven, and who has come to a knowledge of the power of this forgiveness,—the power of a new life,—is the sign to the world that the life is there. True, the altered character of the man is a sign, but the life of Christ is not divided, and since He who forgives all our iniquities by His life is the One who also heals all our diseases by the same life, the two things ought to go together. If they do not, it shows that there is a failure to appreciate all the fullness of God's life; the word is not given free course, that it may be glorified.

THE AUTHORITY GIVEN TO MAN.

THERE is one more most important lesson for us to learn from this incident. When the people saw what had been done "they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power to men." Matt. ix. 8. The margin of the Revised Version has "authority." Many read this carelessly, thinking that the power referred to was the power given to the man enabling him to walk. That is to lose more than half the lesson. Who was Jesus?—He Himself used the common title, "the Son of man." Those who were sitting by knew Him as nothing else than the son of the carpenter. He was in every sense of the word a man, one of the people, made in all things like unto His brethren. He appeared on earth as the Representative Man,—the representation of God's idea of a man,—a perfect man. He was the visible manifestation of God, and that is what the original man was. Indeed, without God in him, man is nothing. Only in Christ can anybody attain unto "a perfect man." That which Christ was on earth, every man may be in Him. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him ye are made full, who is the Head of all principality and power." Col. ii. 9, 10. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and He has placed in us the word of reconciliation, so that He now beseeches men by us, just as He did by Christ. We, that is, all who are reconciled, are "in Christ's stead." So God has given to every man who has come to Him in Christ, the authority to announce to men the forgiveness of sins, not in his own name, but in the name of Jesus. "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

Do you see a sad and despondent sinner mourning over his sins?—Then know that to you is given the authority to say, "Be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee." Aye, every one who knows the full power of forgiveness in his own soul and body, needs no assurance of this right, for he cannot but make known to others that which he himself knows so well. Every person who is mourning for his sins, gives evidence that he acknowledges himself to be a sinner, and unable in himself to remove his own sins; and we have the right, in the name of the Lord, to declare the forgiveness of sins to every one who confesses them. What a glorious gift! In this consists the greatest joy of the pardoned sinner: the power that cleanses him from sin gives him the authority to minister the

gift to others. Take it as freely as it is given, and give God the glory.

KEEPING THE TONGUE.

"KEEP thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." This is a text that ought to be repeated over and over with increasing emphasis, for evil speaking has come to be the bane of society, and the curse of the church. With many, even professed Christians, it is so easy to listen to and circulate an evil report against their fellowmen. It may or it may not be true, but whether true or false it has the same blighting effect.

Evil speaking emanates from the "father of lies." He is the "accuser of the brethren." Not so Christ. Though persecuted and slandered and insulted, He uttered no retaliatory word in reply. When He was reviled, "He reviled not again."

How restful and satisfactory it is, when one at the close of day, can look back over it and feel that in his intercourse with the people, no word of censure or criticism or evil speaking has passed his lips. As the flesh which the children of Israel ate in the wilderness was to them a momentary gratification, but with it came leanness of soul, so while it no doubt does afford a morbid pleasure to gossipers to revel in the weaknesses of a brother, yet the one who indulges in it is soon shorn of his spiritual strength. If one can not speak well of a person, it is best to say no ill of him, at least. An evil-speaking tongue is a sure index to a low state of religion. The apostle James says, "If any man among you seemeth to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain."

"COME out of her, my people." What marvellous power there is in the Lord's word, "Come." When He walked upon the sea, He said to Peter, "Come," and by the power of that word, Peter came. There is power in it to overcome the flesh. In our spirits we ascend into heaven, but the flesh keeps us here. But God said to Elijah, "Come," and he went into heaven. By the same power the trumpet voice of the archangel will call to the sleeping millions in their graves, "Come forth," and they will obey. And that same word, when spoken to God's people in Babylon will cause them to come forth out of it, conquerors over the king of Babylon—Satan,—as the three worthies in Babylon of old were conquerors over king Nebuchadnezzar.



THE BREAD PETITION.

MUCH of the meaning of the Lord's Prayer lies in the order of its petitions. The first longings of a truly devout heart are for the hallowing of God's name, the coming of God's kingdom, and the doing of God's will. Then follows a prayer for bread. We should never forget this order. We are to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and then all things needful for our bodies will be added.

Yet it is a great comfort to know that we may bring our bodily wants to God in prayer. Throughout the Scriptures we are taught that nothing which concerns our life in any way is too small to be of interest to Him who feeds the birds and clothes the flowers.

This petition for daily bread, like all the sayings of Christ, is full of deep meaning. Every word has its rich suggestions. We ask God to give us bread. We thus recognise our dependence on Him for it. It is not easy to offer this petition

WITH REAL MEANING

when we have plenty in our hands and no fear of want. We can conceive of the very poor, with no bread, on the verge of starving, uttering the prayer, and putting their whole heart into it. But for those who have never felt a real pang of hunger, and have never been without a store from which to draw for to-morrow's provision, it is hard to realise the sense of dependence which the petition implies.

This is one of the words of Christ whose full meaning only experience can teach. Yet it is true that whatever abundance may be ours, we are actually dependent upon God for each day's bread. The story of the forty years of the miracle of manna in the wilderness is but a parable of another miracle infinitely greater—the providing of bread for all earth's millions all the days of all the centuries. What we call the laws of nature are but our Father's ordinary ways of working. The regularity of these laws is but the proof of Divine faithfulness. Suppose that for a single year, or but for a week, God's miracle of bread should cease from the earth, what would be the consequences?

This prayer implies also that all the bread of the world is God's. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof."

THE BREAD BELONGS TO HIM,

and what we need can become ours only through His gift. We may take it and use it without asking Him for it, but if we do we take that to which we have no right. Even if the food be on our table, ready to be eaten, it is not yet ours until we have asked God for it. Those who pray not, nor even think of God, seem to be fed as well as the righteous—sometimes more bountifully. "God maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." But there is a difference. Those who ask God for their bread get it as His gift and with His blessing upon it, while those who take it without asking for it get it, and may be fed; but they lose the blessing. This suggests the true meaning, and the fitness of the Christian custom of asking a blessing before a meal.

The form of the prayer teaches also the lesson of *unselfishness*. It is not "Give me," but "Give us." We cannot come to God for ourselves alone. We must

ASK BREAD FOR OTHERS,

for all—even for our enemies, if we have enemies. Especially must we think of the needy, the destitute, asking God to give them bread. If our prayer is sincere we must be ready also, so far as we have opportunity, and so far as we are able, to help answer our own prayer for others, by sharing our plenty with those who lack. "Whoso hath this world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?"

One of the most beautiful commentaries on this teaching is in the narrative of the early Church. After the day of Pentecost, in the glow of the new-born love of the disciples, those who had abundance gave to those who were poor, so that none lacked.

Bow thy head and pray
That while thy brother starves to-day
Thou mayest not eat thy bread at ease;
Pray that no health or wealth or peace
May lull thy soul while the world lies
Suffering, and claims thy sacrifice.

There is a limitation in the petition. "Give us our bread this day." In the other form of the prayer, in Luke, the words vary somewhat, "Give us our daily bread day by day." In Matthew it is a prayer only for the one day, with no thought of any to-morrow; in Luke it

takes in other days, but only as they come, one day at a time. In both forms we are taught to pray only for the *bread of one day*. There is a deep lesson in this teaching. Life is not given to us by the year or the month, but

BY SINGLE DAYS.

Night is the horizon which bounds our vision; we see not the morrow, and we are to confine our thought to the little space included between the rising and the setting of the sun. This does not forbid forethought—the Bible encourages wise and proper care for the future. But all we are authorised to ask God for is simply enough for the present day. Even if in the evening our last crust is eaten, and there is nothing in store for to-morrow, we need not be afraid. When the morrow comes we may ask for its own bread, and know that He will hear us.

There is a special suggestiveness in the word "our"—"Give us our bread." It is God's bread first; it becomes ours through God's gift. But there is something else also implied—the bread *must be earned* by us before it is properly ours. It is clearly taught in the Scriptures that everyone must work for his own bread. This was the law of the unfallen state in Eden, and is now the law in the kingdom of redemption. Of course this does not apply to little children who are too young to work, to the old who are too feeble, or to the sick who are incapacitated for work—all such come under God's special care, and will not be forgotten. But all who are able to work must do so, or the bread they eat is not rightfully their own. "If any will not work, neither should he eat."

The bread must be earned also in ways which have the Divine approval. If a man steals his daily bread, it is not his—he has robbed God and robbed his fellow-man, and there is

A CURSE ON WHAT HE EATS.

Money got in fraudulent transactions or by any dishonest means has not been righteously earned, and God's blessing cannot be invoked upon it by any form of prayer. Imagine a gambler, for example, living on the fruits of his sin, asking God to give him, with a blessing, the bread on his table! Imagine a saloon-keeper who has earned his bread by selling strong drinks which have brought ruin upon lives and homes, asking God to bless his daily bread! God's bread can become ours with a blessing only when earned in honest ways.

There is yet another limitation in the petition in the word "daily." It means enough for the day—seasonable provision. It is not a prayer, therefore, for a large supply. We are not authorised to ask for *luxuries*. We need not infer that it is wrong for us to have more than our actual need that the day requires; but this is all that is promised. The promise is: "My

God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory." This suggests a very abundant provision. Our Father does everything generously. He is never niggardly or mean in caring for His children. Ofttimes He supplies their wants most abundantly, giving them far more than they need. But we are taught to ask only for enough.

The prayer, therefore, would seem to forbid extravagance. God's bread

SHOULD NEVER BE
WASTED.

There is a story of Carlyle, that one day he was seen going into the middle of the street to pick up a crust of bread which he saw lying there in the dust. Taking it in his hand gently, as if it had been something very valuable, he brushed off the clay and then carried it to the kerb and laid it down, saying, "I was taught by my mother never to waste anything, least of all bread, the most precious of all God's gifts. This crust of bread may feed a hungry dog or a little sparrow." Our Lord Himself taught the same lesson, when, after working His great miracle of the loaves, He directed that all the fragments be gathered up, that nothing should be lost. The bread we get as God's gift is sacred, and not a crumb of it should be wasted, either recklessly or in useless extravagance.

We are taught to limit our wants, but we are to ask in confidence for all we may need for the day. Days differ. Some bring their heavy burdens, their great wants, their keen sorrows, their crosses. Others have fewer needs. God knows our days, and He is better able than we are to measure our real wants for each day. We may safely, therefore, ask for daily bread,

and let Him choose what to give us. He will never give too little.

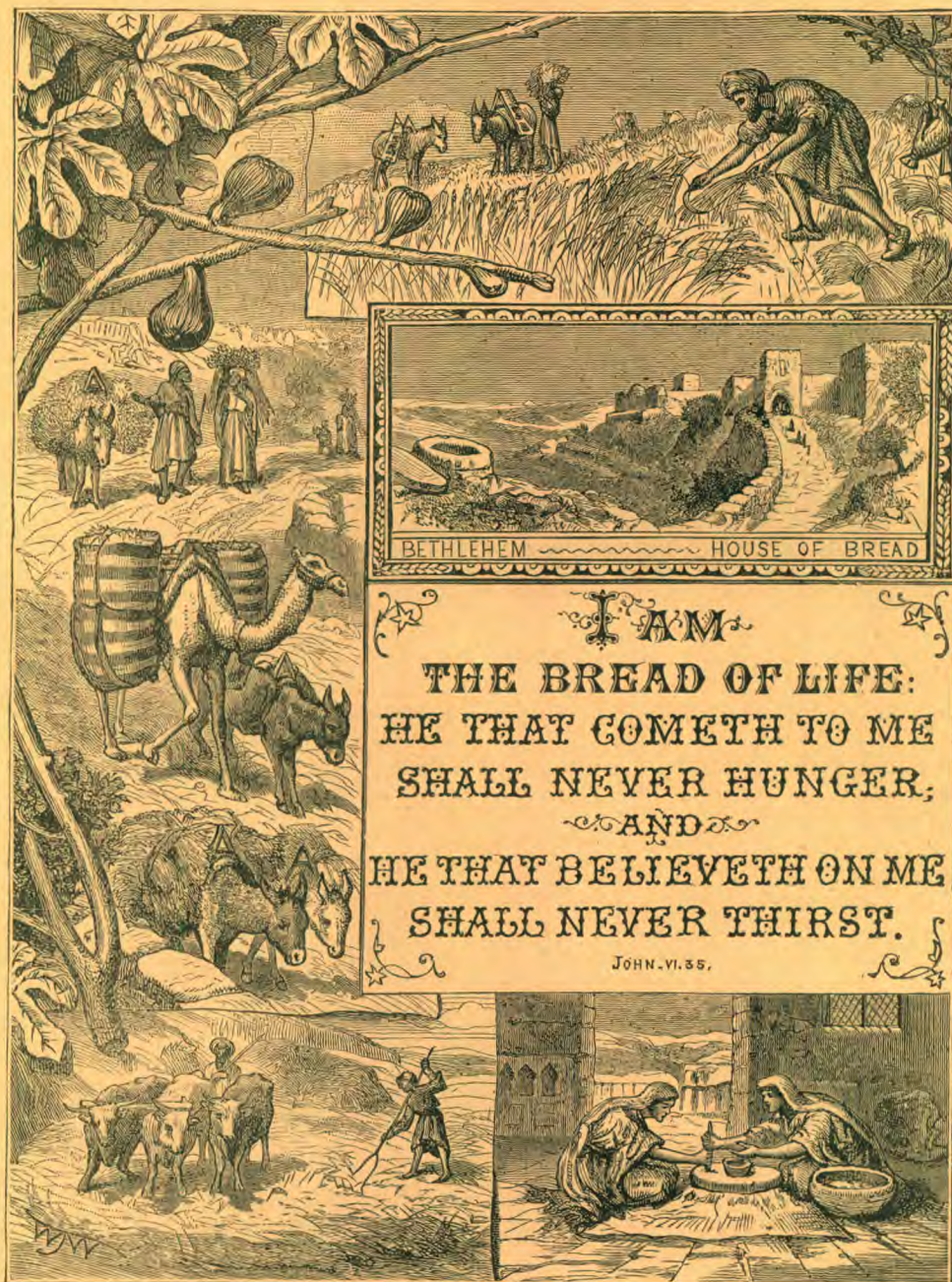
"If, a 'To-morrow,' who can tell?
To sleep, or wake?
To work, or rest?
What He deems best,
God gives, we take,
Knowing, 'He doeth all things well!'"

It is surely a great comfort to know that in this world each one of us is thought

This teaching makes the law of life very simple. We are not to live to get food, but are to live, first and last, as God's and for God. We have nothing to do directly with the supplying of our own wants—that is God's matter, not ours. There are but two things we need to concern ourselves about. First, we are to do our duty—the will of God, as it is made known to us day by day. Then we are to

trust God for the supply of our bodily and temporal wants.

Those who have learned to live thus have found the way of peace. Over-anxiety is sin. It dishonours God, for it is bred of doubt. It hurts our own life, hindering our spiritual growth, marring the beauty of our character, and blurring our witness for God to others. If we faithfully do God's will, as revealed to us, and then trust God perfectly, the peace of God will guard our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus. —J. R. Miller, D.D.



about and cared for by our Father, who loves us with an infinite and everlasting love. He does not think of us merely as a vast, uncounted family, but as individuals. He knows our names. Each one of us is personally dear to Him. The very hairs of our head are all numbered. Not one of us is ever forgotten in heaven for a moment. We can be in no place or condition in which our circumstances are not well known to God. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him."

genial?" cried the fire.

"Burn away," said the bellows, and stopped blowing.

The flame faded, and the ruddy light grew pale.

"So," said the bellows, "I don't think much of your brightness; you can burn only while I blow. Give me the steady flame, that keeps strong and clear without the help of puffing."—Mrs. Prosser.

THE sure test of love is not emotion, but obedience.

PUFF, puff,
went the bellows.

Up went the
flame.

Puff, puff, went
the bellows.

The flame rose
stronger and
higher.

"Am I not
bright, noble,



THREE WISHES.

It was down at the orphan asylum one day,
That three little maids sat round the fire,
Each telling the thing she wished for most,
If she only could have her heart's desire.

"I'd like a pony as white as snow,"
Said Maude, "and I'd ride it each day, of course;
And people would stop, as I rode along,
And say: 'Look at that child on the snow-white horse.'"

Said Alice: "I'd like to own a ship,
And I'd sail clear round the world, I guess,
And bring back presents for all the girls,
And a beautiful crutch for dear little Bess."

Then little lame Bess, with her gentle voice,
Said, looking round from one to the other,
"I'll wish for the loveliest thing in the world—
That every one of us might have a mother."
—*Little Folks.*

A DELIVERER.



PROPHET shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me." These words were spoken to the children of Israel by Moses, and the Prophet of whom he spoke was the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we have been learning lately about the life of Moses, we can see in what ways it was a prophecy,—a telling beforehand, of the life of Jesus Christ on earth.

From his very birth the history of Moses was a shadow of the history of Jesus. Satan was on the watch for his coming into the world, and was ready to kill him just as soon as he should appear. He moved on Pharaoh's heart, and made him afraid that the children of Israel would grow too many and too strong, and would fight against him. Then he tempted him to try to stop this by killing all the baby boys.

The hearts of many poor mothers were made very sad, and the lives of a great many little ones were lost through Pharaoh's cruelty. But the angels of God were watching over Moses when his mother

left him in the little ark by the river, and the Spirit of God moved the heart of Pharaoh's daughter with pity for the beautiful child, so that she took him for her own, and gave his mother the money to take care of him.

You are already thinking, are you not, of the Child Jesus, and the wicked, cruel way in which Herod tried to destroy Him? Satan made Herod feel afraid that Jesus would try to take his place on the throne. Then he suggested to him to get rid of Jesus by slaying *all* the little children, so that he would be sure to kill Him. All the little children under two years old were slain, and a great cry went up from the mothers of Israel,— "Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they were not."

But the angels of God, who watched the cradle on the banks of the Nile, also watched the Babe in the manger in Bethlehem. An angel brought Joseph a message from God, telling him to take the young Child and His mother, and flee into Egypt, away from the wrath of Herod.

Joseph and Mary were poor, and would not, perhaps, have had the money for their journey. But all the silver and the gold in the world belongs to God, and He can do just what He wills with it. Through Pharaoh's daughter He sent the money to Moses' mother. And by the Star that appeared in the East He led the wise men to Bethlehem, with rich presents for the infant King,—gold, frankincense, and

myrrh. These gifts provided for all their needs while on their journey and during their stay in Egypt.

Another thing that we noticed in the life of Moses was that his brethren "refused him;" they would not believe that God had chosen him to deliver them. In this also his life was a shadow of the life of Jesus. For the Jews ill-treated Jesus, and said, "We will not have this Man to reign over us." But this did not upset the plan of God, for He exalted Him to be a Prince and a Saviour of those who had rejected Him.

Moses spent forty years of his life as a shepherd, and was thus prepared for the time when God "led His people like a flock" through the wilderness by the hand of Moses. In this he was a shadow of the great Good Shepherd, who leads His sheep and lambs through the wilderness of this world, feeds them and shelters them, and keeps them from straying into dangerous places.

If we listen to the voice of our Shepherd and follow Him, He will lead us safely to the Promised Land where all His flock will be gathered at last, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd.

THE GOSPEL IN GREENLAND.

WHEN missions were begun among the Greenlanders, it seemed as hard to change them as it would be to melt

the ice around the North Pole. They made fun of the missionaries. One stole a Bible, and sewed the precious leaves together to make himself a coat. During preaching they would pretend to sleep, and snore, or drown the singing by beating drums. They stole the food and papers of the missionaries, stoned them, and when their food was gone, refused to sell them any. The Eskimos were dirty and low in



their ways; the mothers licked their children, instead of washing them, just as cats lick kittens.

At last the Gospel story touched the heart of one Eskimo, named Kayarnak. He drew near to the missionary, saying, "Tell it to me once more; for I, too, want

to be saved." From that day Kayarnak's heart and life were changed. Daily he came to the missionary's hut, and sat, with tears rolling down his cheeks, listening to the stories of Jesus. The other Eskimos, seeing his changed life and actions, began to listen too. It must be a wonderful Book which had so changed him. They, too, wished to be changed. Cruelty gave place to kindness. Sins were confessed, and forgiveness was sought. They began to love, and even to help, others. Kayarnak became their teacher. He taught the missionaries the Eskimo language, and helped them translate the Bible.—*Selected.*

"HE GIVETH SNOW."

AS you have lately seen the pure white snow falling, and clothing the earth with a soft garment, you have no doubt been reminded of some of the beautiful words of Scripture concerning it.

Have you remembered that "He giveth



snow like wool?" This will teach you much about the snow: where it comes from; what produces it; and what is God's purpose in giving it.

Notice first that it is God who gives both the snow and the wool; and He gives both in the same way, for "He giveth snow like wool."

You know what it is that produces the snow. It is the cold, which causes the water to freeze into the tiny crystals that we see in the snow-flakes. God sends the cold, for it is "by the breath of the Lord frost is given."

Did you know that it is also the cold, which causes the wool to grow on the backs of the sheep? In very warm countries where there is no cold winter weather, the sheep have no wool, but long, silky hair coats instead. The colder the climate the thicker the wool grows; there is even a difference in the same sheep according to the severity of the winter; in very cold winters the wool grows thicker than in mild winters. The cold affects the skin in a way that causes the wool to grow more plentifully.

You will see in this the goodness and loving care of God for His creatures. For

in cold weather the sheep of course need a thicker coat, and so God provides it for them by the very thing that makes them need it, the cold.

It is for just the same purpose that He sends the snow,—to provide a warm garment for the earth to keep the ground from freezing and to save the seeds and plants from perishing. For when the cold is intense enough to injure these things it also affects the water, and causes the falling rain to crystallise into the snow that makes a warm coat for the ground and plants. So you see that the purpose of the wool and the snow are the same, and God gives both in the same way, by the cold which makes them necessary.

But not only the ground and the animals find in the effects of cold a protection from the cold. In our picture you will see how useful the snow is to the people who live in Arctic regions, for they do all their building with it in the winter. It is the warmest material that they can have to make their house of. They pack it into

hard blocks, and shape these little round huts from it. Here they manage to keep warm and cosy all through the cold weather.

God gives to all His creatures exactly what they need in the circumstances in

which He has placed them. He knows just the needs of all, and provides for them; for "the Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works."

A WAY TO GROW WISE.

AFTER reading a book, or an article, or an item of information from any reliable source, before turning your attention to other things, give two or three minutes' quiet thought to the subject that has just been presented to your mind; see how much you can remember concerning it; and if there are any new ideas, instructive facts, or points of special interest that impressed you as you read, force yourself to recall them. It may be a little troublesome at first, until your mind gets under control and learns to obey your will; but the very effort to think it all out will engrave the facts deeply upon the memory,—so deeply that they will not be effaced by the rushing in of a new and different set of ideas: whereas, if the matter be given no further consideration at all, the impressions you have received will fade

away so entirely that within a few weeks you will be totally unable to remember more than a dim outline of them.

Form the good habit, then, of always reviewing what has just been read. It exercises and disciplines the mental faculties, strengthens the memory, and teaches concentration of thought.

You will soon learn, in this way, to think and reason intelligently, to separate and classify different kinds of information; and in time the mind, instead of being a lumber-room in which the various contents are thrown together in careless confusion and disorder, will become a storehouse where each special class or item of knowledge, neatly labelled, has its own particular place, and is ready for use the instant there is need of it.—*St. Nicholas.*

STRONGER THAN STEEL.

"I'll master it," said the axe, and his blows fell heavily on the iron: but every blow made his edge more blunt, till by and by he ceased to strike.

"Leave it to me," said the saw; and with his relentless teeth he worked backward and forward on the iron surface till they were all worn down or broken; then he fell aside.

"Ha! ha!" said the hammer, "I knew you wouldn't succeed; I'll show you the way." But at his first fierce stroke off flew his head, and the iron remained as before.

"Shall I try?" asked the soft, small flame. But they all despised the flame; yet he curled gently round the iron, and embraced it, and never left it till it melted under his irresistible influence.

There are hearts hard enough to resist the force of wrath, the malice of persecution, and the fury of pride, so as to make their acts recoil on their adversaries; but there is a power stronger than any of these and hard indeed is the heart that can resist love.—*Mrs. Prosser.*

THE LONG-LIVED ELEPHANT.—According to Aristotle, Buffon, and Cuvier, the elephant may live for two centuries. After his victory over Porus, Alexander consecrated to the sun an elephant that had fought for the Indian monarch and gave it the name of Ajax. Then, having attached an inscription, he set it at liberty. The animal was found 350 years later, making its age easily somewhere between three and four centuries.

* * *

Most people dread far more the social frown which follows the doing of something conventionally wrong than they do the qualms of conscience which follow the doing of something intrinsically wrong.—*Herbert Spencer.*



SEA AND SHORE.

A BEAR THAT LIVES IN WATER.

NEXT time you have a chance, recommends the *Chicago Record*, put some water from the edge of a standing pond under a high-power microscope, and perhaps you will see that most interesting little organism known as the water bear. It is a diminutive animal, often found in drinking water, and looks very much like a bear. The extraordinary thing, however, about this tiny creature is that he is found in the gutters of houses, where he is at one time dry as dust and scorched by the blazing sun, at another active and full of life, under a refreshing shower of rain. The water bear has the scientific name of *tardigrada*, because he takes life so easy. He is always fat and plump, and spends his waking periods in constantly grubbing with his four pairs of legs among whatever rubbish comes in his way. Having eyes, brain, and a nervous system, he is much ahead of most of his tribe, and he is altogether one of the most interesting and amusing little animals known to science.

THE RICHES OF THE SEA.

THE average value of the product of agricultural lands per acre or square mile is often computed, but probably few of us have seen similar computations relating to the sea. Professor Heusens, writing in the German geographical periodical "*Globus*," has figured out an average of this sort for the North Sea, which is well known to be one of the world's great sources of value derived from fisheries.

He says the value of the fish caught in the North Sea yearly, by the countries bordering it, is about 41,000,000 dollars. The yearly catch is never known to be less than 37,500,000 dollars, nor more than 45,000,000 dollars. The North Sea, including the Skager Rak, or gulf between the southern part of Norway and Sweden, has an area of 225,884 square miles, and therefore the average value of the North Sea fisheries each year is 18 dollars and 15 cents for each square mile of the sea.

England and Scotland take the lion's share of the wealth of these waters, the

annual value of the English fisheries being about 21,250,000 dollars; Scotland, 6,650,000 dollars; Holland, 4,750,000 dollars; France, 3,120,000 dollars; Germany, 2,500,000 dollars; Norway, 950,000 dollars; Belgium, 900,000 dollars; Denmark, 400,000 dollars.

Thus all the nations around the North Sea share in the wealth it yields, and it gives some idea of the direct monetary value of this great watery waste to know that every square mile of it adds over 18 dollars a year to the production of the nations living along its edge.—*New York Sun*.

A SHARK STORY.

THE captain of an American tramp steamboat recently told the following curious story: "We were in the Indian Ocean one afternoon," he said, "and I noticed a shark swimming round the ship. I didn't like it a bit. You know the superstition that exists about a shark's following a vessel. He sailed around us all the next day, and the next after that, and I determined to catch him and have his life, so that I shouldn't feel uneasy about losing a life from those on board. We had a baited hook out for him, but he wouldn't bite, and on the third day I fixed up a bit that I thought would land him, and sure enough in the afternoon we got him. He fought like a wild beast, but we got him on board finally and killed him. Then we cut him up. Do you know, we found in that shark's belly a newspaper in a wrapper, unopened, and it will surprise you, as it did me, when I tell you that it was addressed to me."

A shout of great laughter went up, and there were some remarks to the effect that when it comes to lying, a Yankee can beat the world. The skipper took all the bantering in good part, and when the jeers were ended, he said: "Now I'll tell you how it happened. I found that my children had been skylarking the day before in the cabin. They found among the mass of reading that we had brought, some of the unopened newspapers that had been sent to me. They had been throwing these newspapers at each other, and one of them went out of the port hole. The shark saw

it, of course, and gobbled it down, and that was how it happened. Now you can judge for yourselves whether I am truthful."

SINGING FISH.

THE *scievia*, a little six-inch chub variety of the lagoons of Italy, sticks its head above the water, and sings a dainty song equal to that of some species of warbling birds. *Irigla hirundo* (the sea swallow) is known to every fisherman of the Danube and the Rhine by the peculiar grunting noise it makes. *Irigla nolitans* makes a whining noise like a puppy, while the *scievia* gather in bands to hold regular concerts, which no doubt originated the fable of the sirens. Some naturalists have likened the note of the gurnard to that of the cuckoo. There are many different kinds of fish which give utterance to more or less musical tones. The maigre, a large sea-fish, when swimming in shoals, utters a purring noise that may be heard from a depth of 20 fathoms. Lieutenant White, in his "*Voyage to the China Seas*," relates that his crew and himself were extremely astonished by hearing certain musical notes from beneath and around the vessel. They were various, like the bass notes of an organ, the sound of bells, the croaking of frogs, and a pervading twang which the imagination might have attributed to the vibrations of some enormous harp. For a time the mysterious music swelled upon them, and finally formed a universal chorus all around, but as the vessel ascended the river the sounds diminished in strength, and soon ceased.—*Selected*.

VALUE OF A GREENLAND WHALE.

IT is seldom that one meets any one who understands the value of a Greenland whale. A well-boned and large one as she floats is worth to-day something between two and three thousand pounds. This huge price is due to the value of whalebone, which is a very rare commodity, and yet is absolutely essential for some trade purposes. The price tends to rise steadily, for the number of the creatures is diminishing. In 1880 Captain Gray calculated that there were probably not more than 300 of them left alive in the whole expanse of the Greenland seas, an area of thousands of square miles. How few there are is shown by the fact that he recognised individuals amongst those which we chased. There was one with a curious wart about the size of a beehive upon his tail, which he had remembered chasing when he was a lad on his father's ship. Perhaps other generations of whalers may follow that warty tail, for the whale is a very long-

lived creature. How long they live has never been ascertained; but in the days when it was customary to stamp harpoons with the names of vessels, old harpoons have been cut out of whales bearing names long forgotten in the trade, and all the evidence goes to prove that a century is well within their powers.—*Strand*.

THE SAD BIRD OF THE SEA.

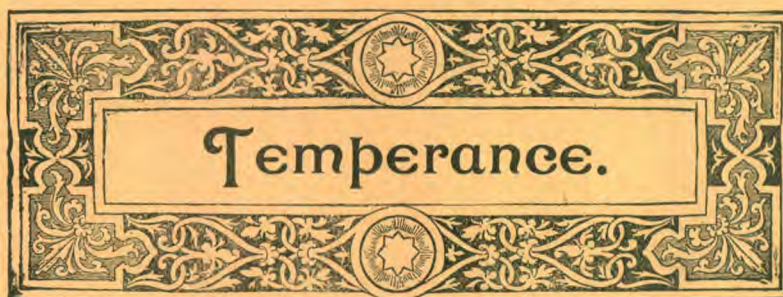
THE penguin is a bird found in the Southern Ocean and Antarctic regions. Its life seems to be the most joyless and unpleasant imaginable. Most of its time is spent in the water, except at the breeding season, when great numbers resort to rocky islands, and there build their nests, and hatch their young.

Their nests are made up of seaweed and bits of stick, left by the waves, laid in some crevice or opening of the rock. Here the eggs are deposited, and then this strange bird sits upon them in an upright position, until the little chicks appear.

Unlike other birds, the penguin has no wings. The little appendages that grow where the wings belong, are more like fins covered with small, stiff feathers. The feet are webbed, and these with their small wings, used as fins, give them great speed under water. They are absolutely useless and defenceless on land. They live on fish and little sea forms that they catch under the waves. They have no song, and make very little noise, except when a great number are together.—*Selected*.

A HILL OF OYSTER SHELLS.—In the south-central portion of North Dakota, in the United States, there are two hills, 200 feet or more in height, which are composed of little else than oyster shells. The base of the hill, which at a height of about 100 feet is divided and forms two peaks, each 100 feet high, is about three-quarters of a mile in length, and oblong in shape. At Castle Hill, near Newhaven, about eight miles from Brighton, immediately beneath the turf, is a regular sea-beach of oyster shells, many feet in thickness, forming the summit of the chalk cliff, 150 feet above the level of the sea. Near Bromley, in Kent, and Reading, in Berkshire, similar accumulations of pebbles and oyster shells are to be found.

FISH-HATCHING.—In China fish-hatching is sometimes conducted with the aid of a hen. The spawn is collected from the water's edge, and placed in an empty egg-shell. The egg is then sealed with wax and placed under a sitting hen. After some days the egg is carefully broken, and the spawn emptied into water well warmed by the sun. Then the little fish are nursed until they are strong enough to be turned into a lake or stream.



PARALYSING INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL.

WE are directly confronted by two articles; namely, alcohol, as it exists in all the various fermented and distilled liquors; and tobacco, the uses of which are indulged in extensively by the people of every country in Christendom, and more or less by all classes of society. Opium, cocaine, chloral, and other narcotics are allies in the work of nervous and mental perversion, but are far less in general use. Ethyl alcohol, the only active ingredient in the fermented and distilled drinks, and nicotine, the active agent in tobacco, in their pure state are described by all chemists, pharmacists, and toxicologists as most virulent poisons, speedily destructive to both animal and vegetable life, even in moderate doses. When, however, they are largely diluted, and taken in small doses, they produce such a diminution of nerve sensibility and such a relief from mental anxiety that repetition soon establishes a feeling so fascinating that all other interests of the individual are made subordinate to its gratification.

Having been introduced into general use long before the modern facilities for chemical, biological, and physiological research were known, the influence of alcohol as an anesthetic diminishing the sensibility of the nerve cells of the cerebral hemisphere, the material seat of man's consciousness, created the universal belief that its internal use is warming, strengthening, and nourishing to the living human body.

Yet simple observation alone has clearly proved that the more alcohol a man consumes, the more quickly he succumbs to cold; the less work, whether mental or physical, can he accomplish; and the more readily he yields to attacks of disease of every kind. All this apparent contradiction was fully explained when, in the progress of the chemical, physiological, and therapeutical researches of the last half of the present century, it was demonstrated that alcohol possesses a strong affinity for water and albuminoid substances, and when taken into the living stomach, is rapidly transferred, by absorption, to the blood, with which it is carried to every organised structure of the body, exerting a deteriorating influence on the organised protoplasm or cells of both blood and tissues. By its influence on the hemoglobin and protoplasm

of the blood it lessens the capacity of that fluid to receive oxygen from the cells of the lungs and to distribute it to the various tissues, and thereby it diminishes the processes of oxidation and metabolism. By its contact with the nerve structures it lessens their functions, both of sensibility and transmission, and thereby impairs nerve sensibility, muscular strength, and mental activity according to the quantity of alcohol taken.

It is this impairment of sensibility in the cerebral convolutions, that renders the individual less conscious of cold or heat, of weariness or pain, and thereby destroys his sensibility to judge correctly concerning his own condition or that of his surroundings. The same dulling, paralysing influence extends to the moral faculties, impairing the sense of propriety and self-control, and encouraging inconsiderate and often reckless or immoral conduct.—*N. S. Davis, M.D.*

PATE DE FOIE GRAS.

PERDON, a provision merchant of Paris, has, for eight years, been supplying the Parisians with potted horse-flesh labelled "Pâté de foie gras," for which offence he has been sent to prison for eight months. Had he supplied the genuine article the law would not have touched him; yet, both from a moral and hygienic standpoint, horse-flesh is far to be preferred to "Pâté de foie gras." We think our readers will agree with our opinion, when we tell them that that this loathsome and unchristian compound is made from enlarged goose livers, which are produced in the following cruel manner:—

"The geese are taken from the pastures when about nine months old, and placed in an underground cellar, where broad, slanting, stone slabs stand in rows, and are bound fast to the tables. They are literally crucified. Feet, wings, and bodies are spread out and bound by bands, so that only the neck is left free. As may be imagined, the animal struggles with all its might against this stretching, till, after days of vain endeavour to free itself from the bands and its position, its powers of resistance are overcome, and a dull resignation, broken only by its low cries, takes possession of it.

"Two months must pass away before

death brings relief. The animals are meanwhile crammed with dumplings made of dough, buckwheat, chestnuts, and stewed maize. Every two hours, six times a day, they receive from three to five dumpling pills. The most difficult task is to determine the right moment for death. Those who die of their own accord are lost to the liver factory, therefore a kind of study is needed to see when the cup of agony is brimming full, and the liver is ripe for taking.—*Herald of the Golden Age.*

ALCOHOL AND DEGENERATION.

IT is shown by the vital statistics of every country where such records have been kept, that those who habitually use alcoholic drinks are more liable to be attacked by all infectious diseases, and furnish annually a higher ratio of mortality, than the total abstainers living otherwise in the same environment. The same statistics also show that a much greater ratio of the children born of drinking parents die under five years; and of those who pass the period of infancy, a larger ratio becomes affected with tuberculosis, epilepsy feeble-mindedness, and all grades of mental and moral perversions.

An eminent specialist in diseases of children has noted the progress of twelve families with parents who were habitual users of alcoholic drinks, and of twelve families with total abstaining parents. During the twelve years these families were under his observation, the twelve first named gave birth to fifty-seven children, of whom twenty-five died in the first week after birth, five were idiots, five were dwarfs, five later became epileptics, and later one had chorea, ending in idiocy, and five others were more or less deformed and unhealthy, leaving only eleven of the fifty-seven children to arrive at maturity in a healthy condition of body and mind. The twelve families with temperate parents during the same period of time were blessed with sixty-one children, of whom only six died during the first week after birth; later two only showed inherited defects of the nervous system, leaving fifty-three of the sixty-one healthy in body and mind.—*Temperance Bulletin.*

It is only by softening and disguising dead flesh by culinary preparation, that it is rendered susceptible of mastication or digestion, and that the sight of its bloody juices and raw horror does not excite loathing and disgust.—*Percy B. Shelley.*

* *

It must be honestly admitted that weight by weight, vegetable substances, when they are carefully selected, possess the most striking advantages over animal

food in nutritive value. . . . I should like to see the vegetarian and fruit-living plan brought into general use, and I believe it will be.—*Sir B. W. Richardson, M.D., F.R.S.*

* *

No physiologist would dispute with those who maintained that man ought to live on vegetarian diet.—*Dr. Spencer Thompson.*

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

—There will be a total eclipse of the sun on May 28th, and the Greenwich Observatory is making extensive preparations to view it, which, however, will appear only as a partial eclipse at this point.

—No fewer than seven municipal corporations have Bills before Parliament this session, by which they seek power to erect crematoria. This method of disposing of the dead is gaining in popular favour in England, a number of people of rank who have lately died having stipulated that their remains be disposed of in this way.

—Last year 1,952,456 packs of cards were manufactured in England. There is a stamp duty of threepence per pack, which yields a revenue to the Government of £24,405. An additional sum of £5,346 was received as duty on cards that were imported. Think of the gambling spirit that there must be in our midst to cause this vast expenditure.

—Russia is suffering from a coal deficit estimated at about 1,000,000 tons less than the ordinary output. Russian agents are now travelling through English coalfields purchasing, and the Minister of Finance has been forced to ask permission of the Czar to allow railways to import foreign coal duty free. This deficiency is working great hardship on the poor of Russia.

—Two large elephants at the Crystal Palace, belonging to Sanger's Circus, became enraged, broke loose, killed their keeper, and then escaped. One was afterwards captured and shot, and the other was found in a wood the next day; he was enticed out by some other elephants, and brought safely back. The amount of damage to property that he did while loose amounts to hundreds of pounds.

—In New York a new method of battling with consumption is being watched with great interest. It consists in driving, by means of a hitherto unsuspected force in electricity, formaldehyde, one of the most powerful germicides known, into the lungs from the outside of the body. It is believed that by this method all cases of consumption in the first stage, and three-quarters of those in the second stage, and about a third of those that are regarded as hopeless, can be cured.

—A surgeon in the French army has just discovered that stamp collectors may be the means of disseminating tuberculosis by means of the stamps. A man in his employ who was a great stamp collector inoculated guinea-pigs with the water in which 300 stamps had been soaked, and in every case they died with characteristic tuberculosis lesions. The warning is given that children should be prohibited against placing any stamps near their mouths in order to moisten them, and foreign stamps should be disinfected in a five per cent. solution of carbolic acid before adding them to collections.

—The number of newspapers published in the British Isles is 2,478, of which 521 are issued in London.

—The weather at Buenos Ayers is intensely hot. On the 5th inst. there were in that city 219 cases of sunstroke, and 134 deaths.

—Twenty-five of the twenty-nine leading steel and sheet mill firms of the United States have just formed themselves into a trust, with a capital of £13,000,000. The name of the new combination will be known as the American Steel Sheet Company.

—The Society of Public Analysts celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary recently. The president stated that nearly 1,000 articles were presented weekly for analysis. Four thousand articles of consumption were condemned last year as adulterated.

—As a slight indication of the "penny system" by which many in London live, it was stated at a recent meeting of the Gas Light and Coke Company that during the past twelve months the automatic penny-in-the-slot gas meters had absorbed seventy-five million pennies.

—Sir Thomas Lipton has recently donated a large sum of money, and is working out the practical details of a scheme whereby the poorer classes in London will be able to procure food at actual cost price. Already a large stone building, four stories high, has been erected, in a poor section of London, which will be occupied as a store, for this purpose.

—Fresh eggs are now put up in tins, and these are being sold by the ton to restaurant keepers in New York, and presently large quantities of them will be placed upon the English market. The whites and yolks are first separated, then put into tins; later on the tins are sealed, after which they are frozen, in which condition they are expected to be kept until used.

—In America a new society has recently been organised, called "The Actors' Church Alliance." The object of this combination is said to be the bringing together of the church and stage on a common basis of fellowship. Members of the dramatic profession, and members of all churches are eligible for membership by the payment of four shillings per year. The constitution requires that "ministers and church members will not hesitate to take their families to the opera and theatre where performances of good moral tone are presented."

—There has of late been considerable agitation concerning the infectious character of the "holy water" contained in the fountains of Roman Catholic churches. According to the *Lancet*, a microscopical examination of a great many samples from different churches in different places has resulted in the discovery of abundant microbes of a serious character. In one instance two guinea-pigs injected with sediment from the "holy water" of a church, died in thirty hours. As the result of the investigation, a fount of running water is being substituted in some churches in the place of the one ordinarily used.

—At Earlestone, near Yarmouth, an evening banquet was recently held, at which three-score fishermen were invited to a "sea pie" feast. A pie was provided that weighed 154 pounds. It was built with three decks. At the bottom was beef and bones, then a layer of crust, over which were placed beef, pork, liver, and kidneys. Then came another deck of dough on which were potatoes, onions, and more meat, and finally the whole was roofed with a crust several inches thick. It was seven hours in cooking, and the guests to the number of sixty-five were supplied with it until the whole was consumed. Think of how they must have felt the next morning!

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THE editorial article on health is unavoidably omitted in this number. It is the design to continue the study next week.

SINCE the death of Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, very stringent measures have been taken to prevent any attempt to disturb his resting place, or that of his ancestors. Six guards watch it with loaded rifles at night, and in front of the doors of the mausoleum, a sentry box on wheels is placed, and in this a detective remains watching through the windows the roads to the tomb. In addition, an electric signal alarm is attached to Mr. Vanderbilt's coffin, so that the superintendent of the cemetery, with his ten assistants, may be warned the moment an attempt is made to move the coffin. This is one of the disadvantages that arise to confront those who are "rich and increased in goods."

Not the Peace of God.—The *Christian World* says: "Ministers, like other men, know what it is to find the vexations of life melting away into oblivion under the solace of a quiet pipe. But sometimes this oblivion covers what ought to be remembered," and then relates the case of a clergyman who, under the influence of the narcotic, utterly forgot a funeral which he was to attend, and upon which, because of other engagements, he had enjoined strict punctuality. After waiting in the bitter cold for more than half an hour, the mourners sent a messenger, who found the clergyman before a good fire, oblivious of everything but the fumes of his tobacco god. One cannot help wondering if he pointed the mourners to tobacco as a solace for their troubles. Christ said to His followers, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but "in Me" they are promised peace; how can any man who finds his peace in tobacco profess to be a minister of Christ? Christ gives peace by imparting the strength of His life, which makes a man "of quick understanding," and not

by benumbing the senses. The peace of oblivion, we are happy to know, is not the peace which God gives. He quickens the sensibilities; only the devil gives men "happiness" in oblivion.

Where are You Looking?—When John saw Jesus walking by the river side, he pointed toward Him, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God." Suppose the disciples, instead of looking in the direction where John pointed, had looked only at his finger; they would not have seen the Christ. Now that is just what a great many people are doing. The Gospel teacher's only business is to point men to the Lamb of God; he is to be a seer, and to point out to other people what he sees. But if they keep looking at him, instead of where he is pointing, and expect to get the knowledge from him,—to make his sight answer for theirs,—they will certainly see nothing. As soon as people get hold of the idea that if they wish to see they must rouse themselves to use their own eyes, that is, that they must acquire the knowledge of God and His truth in the same way that the teacher does, they cease to complain that the Gospel is so obscure that they cannot understand it.

BOASTING.

MY soul shall make her boast in the Lord." There is a great deal of boasting in these latter days; indeed, one of the signs given, that we may know when the last days have come is that "men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . boasters, etc." A boaster is always telling what great things he has done, or what his ancestors have accomplished.

But boasting is excluded by the law of faith. Rom. iv. 27. Why? "That no flesh should glory," "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Then where may we boast? "My soul shall make her boast—in the Lord." Ah yes. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory, or boast." "Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." When we boast *in the Lord*, that is not telling of any great things we have done, but what He has done and is doing for us. And when the Lord has done something for us, we need not be afraid to tell of it. It is right to boast in the Lord. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and

redemption; that according as it is written, He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord."

SOME ladies having invited Mr. Labouchere to attend a smoking concert and a dance to be given in aid of the Northampton Reservist Fund, he sent a contribution, accompanied by the following:—

"I have always thought that it is somewhat gruesome for fine ladies to get up balls in London to help the wounded, and that they would do better to contribute what they can, without dancing over graves."

That was well said, and it might well be applied to all so-called "charity balls," to say nothing of similar enterprises got up in the interest of churches. All such things, instead of being real expressions of charity are but the taking advantage of the misfortunes or needs of others to get a little "pleasure." It is very doubtful charity, which will give nothing without receiving something in return.

A LEADING minister has just said that "Nonconformity was born on the battle field." That is true only of that sort of nonconformity that goes no further back than the days of Cromwell; but that is not by any means true Nonconformity. Real Nonconformity is the compliance with the divine injunction, "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds." Rom. xii. 2. It is simply to have the mind of Christ, who, as "the Prince of Peace," was born amid acclamations of peace. Wars and fightings come from the lusts of the flesh, that is, from the world, which is in opposition to God. "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts," and you will be true Nonconformists.

SOME years ago Mr. Pullman, of the Pullman Sleeping Car Company, died suddenly, and Mr. Robert T. Lincoln, formerly the United States Minister in England, was appointed as an executor of the estate. His charges were considered exorbitant, and payment was refused, whereupon he went to law over the matter, and a Chicago court has just awarded him £42,500. This sum is much larger than all the money ever received by his father, Abraham Lincoln, including his salary as President of the United States. The interesting point in connection with the matter is the contrast between two periods of American life, the genuinely democratic, and the plutocratic.