

WORD AND WORK

YOUR INTEREST AND OURS.

Our first page offers brought in numerous responses last month and we reprint them in part this month. A number have renewed with remittance, and a number have desired a continuance who were unable to remit just now. What we especially desire is, to *know whether you wish to read the paper or not*. Material is entirely too costly nowadays to throw away any copies. But as to those who will read it, we intend to deny no one the Magazine, whether they can pay now or not; and for that matter whether they can pay at all or not.

Look at the top of this page. If you see a blue stamp, "Your Subscription Has Expired," be sure to read this page through; for that matter read it anyhow. It concerns you, and gets interesting as you go. Many subscriptions are out, and *we intend to drop every one of them—unless*; unless you say "continue," or some friend continues the paper for you. We do not say "Remit," but we do say "Renew"; in other words, we drop no names because the subscription price is not forthcoming; but we do drop those who have not the interest to ask a continuance. We do not say that we do not care whether you send us money now or not, for we could use it mighty well; and while 75c means but little to you, it means much to us—when you multiply it by hundreds; nevertheless, believe us beloved, we "seek not yours, but you" primarily; and we judge that those who have not the interest to *renew* (whether they remit now or not) have not the interest to *read*.

We are just now working out a new and improved mailing system, bringing it right up to the minute—among other things, *linotyping* our subscription list. We propose to rewrite your name *now—if* you are in arrears—or else drop it. Without a doubt, the Word and Work is worth what we ask for it on its merits; still we are disposed to make you additional inducements, because we want *immediate* results.

RATES: SINGLE, CLUB AND AGENT'S.

The rate for a single subscription is 75c a year. In clubs of four or more, 50c. The club rate is also the rate to agents. That is, agents may take subscriptions at 75c each, and remit in groups of four or more, 50c each. Thus any one may act as agent, collecting 75c and sending us 50c; whereas the clubber collects 50c and sends us the whole amount.

WORD AND WORK FREE

with every subscription to the Sunday School Times, at the regular rate, \$1.50 a year, if request is received by December 25.

ATTRACTIVE COMBINATION OFFERS.

Word and Work one year to new or old subscribers with R. H. Boll's book, Lessons on Hebrews, \$1.25; with Outlines of Bible Study, \$1; with B. W. Johnson's "Young Folks in Bible Lands," \$1.

WORDS IN SEASON.

THE TROUBLER OF ISRAEL.

In any cases of difficulty or disruption in a congregation of Christ, it is not always easy to settle the question who has really caused the perturbation, and who is "the troubler of Israel." Frequently the appearances misrepresent the facts. In the example, of Ahab and Elijah—when Ahab met Elijah after the long drouth, and called him the troubler of Israel, what seemed more plausible? For was it not Elijah's word that had fallen like a withering curse upon the land? Had not the land enjoyed quiet and prosperity until this Elijah came? What better proof could one wish that Elijah brought the trouble and made trouble? But Elijah replied with the clear verdict of the oracle of God: "I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah, and thou hast followed the Baalim." (1 Kings 18:17, 18). The apparent trouble-maker was not the real trouble-maker. Or take the case of Paul in his missionary work. He would go to a city like Philippi or Thessalonica, find things peaceful and tranquil, and leave them in the midst of a hubbub and uproar of riot. What could be more conclusive proof to the citizens of those communities that Paul was a great disturber of peace and troubler of the whole country? But the verdict of truth is otherwise. The Lord Jesus Himself has first and last stirred up more trouble on earth than any other person that ever lived—so much so that infidels to this day argue that His religion has occasioned more strife, persecution, wars and bloodshed than it has ever benefited humanity. But did not the Lord Himself say, "Think not that I am come to bring peace on the earth, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother. . . . and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matt. 10:34-36). And if this was the effect of the Lord's own ministry, it is not strange that people look upon His faithful servants also as trouble-makers. But it is not a question to be decided off-hand and by superficial appearances. The Lord Jesus said, "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John 7:24).

WHO IS THE TROUBLER OF ISRAEL?

Who then is a "troubler of Israel"? Who a "divider" in the bad and wrong sense? It is "whoever introduces the thing that causes trouble and divides," we are told. The answer falls short of the mark. If that were the case it would be easy to convict the Lord Jesus Christ and a host of His true servants of the sin of causing division, and of breaking the bond of peace. We must doubtlessly modify it and say that whoever introduces *anything outside of or contrary to the Word of God* is a troubler and divider. Division in itself is inevitable. The case may arise when truth and right and loyalty to Christ can be maintained only at the cost of strife and division. He who imagines that the preaching and

teaching and faithful practice of God's word, will produce only peace and harmony on all hands, has badly misread his Bible. Nothing so stirs up the hatred and illwill of men, not only of unbelievers, but also of careless, or carnally minded Christians. "They will put you out of their synagogues; yea, the time cometh when whosoever killeth you shall think that he offered service unto God." (John 16:2). So long as there are in the church some who live after the flesh, while others walk after the Spirit; so long as there are those who love, and work in unswerving loyalty, for the Lord Jesus Christ; while others strive for "the cause," or a creed, or party; so long as there are those who study the Word of God and teach it, while others are chiefly concerned to preach and defend the representative views of their brotherhood, and are content to maintain what leading men have said—so long there *must* be disagreements, clashes, troubles, and divisions. And it would be highly natural for the party which is at fault in the case to consider those who urge the closer and truer conformity to the word of God as dangerous agitators and divisionists. That cannot be helped. "For there must also be factions among you, that they that are approved may be manifest among you." (1 Cor. 11:19). That man is on the true ground of unity and peace (though he be alone) who stands on the word of God, and speaks the *truth* in love. But he would also be the very man who would be accused of being a divider, and troubler of Israel. But truth is justified of her children.

IN THE CASE OF UNSCRIPTURAL TEACHING.

If, however, by the introduction of doctrines or practices untaught and unauthorized by the word of God, a man should cause disruption in the church, he would be chargeable with the responsibility of the trouble he caused. If he is a good man, "those who are spiritual" (Gal. 6:1) should go over the ground with him, fairly, patiently, in unmistakable kindness, and convince him of his error. Aside from being the *right* thing to do that is simply good common sense. For, if the man is honest and conscientious, it should be possible to show him his mistake; and if convinced he himself should correct the evil results of his error better than any other man could do it; and he, above all men, could influence those to return to the truth, who under his influence had departed from it. I speak now of a case of a good man who is palpably in the wrong. Too often, in such a case, has it happened, no doubt, that those who justly enough, opposed the troubler, forgot all love, and tried to drive where they should have endeavored to lead and restore; and trampled down where they should have used every means of grace (but it was not in them!) in order to heal and to retrieve. And then they finally washed their hands of the whole business in pharisaical self-approval. Even in the case of a man who is grossly and openly at fault, the other side is not always clear of the blame of division. There is in fact, a certain method of procedure toward brethren which is *sure* to bring division, *no matter what the difference in the case*, whether it be small or great, important or

unimportant. It is the method of the flesh, at once foolish and vicious: persecution, oppression, calumny, slander, maligning prescription, ostracism. Those who are guilty of such things have nothing to glory of, no matter how "sound in doctrine" they may be.

IN CASE OF FAIR DOUBT.

The matter is still worse, however, when there is room for reasonable doubt as to the falseness of the supposed "dividers'" position and teaching. If the afore-mentioned case calls for patient consideration, much more does this. In this case nothing would be so much in order as fair and brotherly discussion, investigation, comparison of views and mutual searching of scripture. Honesty makes demand here as well as love. We cannot afford even to *risk* the possibility of a danger of condemning a man for that in which *he* may be right, and ourselves wrong. It would be a heavy condemnation if we did such a thing. Luther said that there was "a pope latent in every man." Yea, a pope and a pharisee both. Let us be watchful!

WHEN "NON-ESSENTIALS" CAUSE TROUBLE.

We cannot dismiss this question, however, without noticing another turn that is sometimes taken. It is argued that even if a teaching were true—that is, strictly according to God's word—yet if it is not essential to salvation it must not be taught when it causes trouble; and that he who causes trouble by teaching a non-essential truth, is also a divider and troubler of Israel. This argument, however plausible it may appear, carries its own condemnation. I fear not to state and to maintain that no man who speaks truth in love can be a divider; but those who by their opposition to the truth ("essential" or "non-essential," it matters not) cause the trouble, are, regardless of numbers or prestige, the troublers and dividers, the real sectarians in the case. But, it is objected, Paul lays down that principle in Rom. 14:22, when he says, "The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God." That is to say, that if anything you believe to be true, so long as it does not affect the essentials of salvation, should offend a brother, keep it to yourself. So, for example, if the teaching of the prophecies, or questions concerning the Lord's Second Coming should occasion trouble in the church, we are (seeing that these questions are not practical, and people can be saved without them) bound by the principle of Rom. 14:22 to keep silent on those themes. Let us examine this argument.

"HAVE IT TO THYSELF."

In the first place it is evident that those who argue after this fashion do not only think that the prophetic teaching of the word of God is *non-essential*, but they look upon it as a matter of *absolute indifference*. The very fact that Rom. 14:22 is appealed to shows that much. For Rom. 14:22 deals with a matter in regard to which a Christian is merely at liberty—such as eating of meats, for example. He may be "strong in the faith," on a point like that, enlightened, understanding fully that there are no regulations

about clean or unclean meats in Christ Jesus. He knows he is entirely free to eat. But (the apostle argues) he is *not therefore obliged* to eat. He can exercise his liberty in either direction. He is just as acceptable with God if he does not eat as if he did eat, and vice versa. For (as Paul says in another place on a similar theme) "food will not commend us to God; neither, if we eat not are we the worse; nor, if we eat are we the better." (1 Cor. 8:8). We are not therefore *enjoined* to eat; nor does eating make us any better or spiritually stronger. It is so far as our welfare is concerned, a matter of pure and absolute indifference. The apostle then argues further that there is therefore no reason why we should not eat unless—and here lies his point—unless my eating should become a stumbling block to my brother. If there is such a danger as that, there is reason for *not* eating; and the enlightened Christian can be content with the knowledge of his freedom, without exercising his privilege, and can hold his faith to himself before God, without applying it in practice to the detriment of his weaker brother. Such is the case set before us in Rom. 14. Question: Does prophetic truth belong to this class of things? Are those doctrines of such a nature that they make us neither better nor worse—that to know and believe them is to all effect exactly the same as not to know and not to believe and teach them? Are we just as well (or, in this case, better) off without them than with them? Are these doctrines such that, like the eating of meats, we may leave them off with the same good results as if we had accepted them? With other words, are they absolutely and utterly optional and indifferent? If so they come under the application of Rom. 14:22.

WHAT SCRIPTURE IS INDIFFERENT?

Now there are actually those who so regard the prophecies of the Old and New Testament, and would justify their utter disregard for about one-third of the Bible on the ground of Rom. 14:22! And this specious plea looks valid to some good people. Harken my beloved brethren—*who shall decide* for us what part of God's word should be held as indifferent and non-essential and supernumerary? Who will judge for us what part of the scripture inspired of God is *not profitable for teaching*? And who shall tell us what part of the Bible it is which God just put in for filler and packing—husk, as it were, which is to be thrown aside, that we may feast on the nourishing grain? What portion, pray, is it which God has marked off, that we may suppress it and keep it to ourselves at the beck of any who may not relish it? Is it actually so that, although in chapter after chapter of His holy word, and in hundreds of texts, God has discussed the things of the future, for our learning, admonition and comfort, it makes us neither better nor worse, to notice or disregard them, and we must not bother folks with those things?

What *God* may think about such an attitude toward His word, I leave my reader to judge. I know as to myself that if I had published a book, and the reviewer would set about one-third of it

aside as not to the point, superfluous, and indifferent, I should not feel complimented. It may indeed be that we do not *see* the practical bearing of much God has spoken; and in such cases it behooves us to believe that He knew what He was doing when He gave us the Bible, and that *He* knew what is good and needful for us, better than *we* know; and simple respect for Him will prevent our assuming censorship over His word. It is clear that this is no case like that in view in Rom. 14:22.

ESSENTIALS AND NON-ESSENTIALS.

As to the essential and non-essential teaching, the servant of God has no commission to distinguish between them. It is ours to preach "the whole counsel." There are some to whom the whole Old Testament appears as very superfluous, and they might demand the preacher to refrain from using any part of it—lest (forsooth) they should raise trouble about it, and so "confusion" would be caused in the church. But the Lord's servant would not be put off by such curious reasoning as that. It is the opposer of the truth, not the teacher of it, that shall bear his iniquity. It is not a part of the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints that we are earnestly to contend for, but all of it. Why should Paul have yearned and prayed exceedingly night and day that he might perfect that which was lacking in the faith of the Thessalonians? (1 Thess. 3:10). He had evidently given them the "essentials" already, as the epistle shows; why would he have been so eager to give them more? Clearly Paul was not one of those who thought that everything beyond mere fundamentals and bare essentials was negligible, and could be suppressed at pleasure.

The fact is no such distinction as "essentials" and "non-essentials" ought to be drawn—nor, indeed, can it be drawn successfully by mortal man. Every part of the word of God has an essential bearing—in some direction—some portions for instruction, some for example, some for warning, some for motive and encouragement, some for comfort and hope; and as the days roll by first one and then another feature of God's word takes a place of supreme importance. The day is nearing (and no one knows how close upon us) when a knowledge of the prophetic word will be absolutely necessary. To diminish the worth and value in the eyes of men of *any* portion of God's word by marking it as unpractical, unnecessary, non-essential, etc., is far from being a mark of safeness, soundness, or loyalty before God, but rather the opposite.

SPEAKING AS THE ORACLES OF GOD.

It seems to me that on Prophecy as on every other portion of God's revelation, the servant of God should be more than willing to speak as the oracles of God. By that it is not meant, however, that he should only read or quote Scripture. He has the right to call attention to what any passage says; to compare it with other scriptures; to illustrate; to apply; to emphasize. His one care must be that when he is done he shall have said what the word of God says. To use as an illustration the 16th verse of Mark 16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." In presenting

the teaching of this text a man might call attention to the order of faith, baptism, salvation; he might show that baptism could not precede belief; and that salvation is not assigned as the antecedent but as the consequent of baptism. He may go to Acts 2:38 to show that repentance comes between belief and baptism; and that "saved" in one passage corresponds with "remission of sins" in the other. He may refer to the case of the Eunuch in Acts 8 as a scripture-example. He may go to other portions to show the necessity of the "obedience of faith," and the issue of acceptance on the one hand and of rejection on the other, and all the while use mostly his own language. But when he has done, he has simply spoken as the oracles of God in the matter. Now I claim that the servant of God should be as willing to be just that faithful when teaching any part of the prophetic scriptures, and that he has a full right (yea, and obligation) to do so, of which no man may defraud him. And to such a principle I heartily subscribe.

THE BEST WE HAVE.

Christ wants the best. He, in the far-off ages
 Once claimed the firstling of the flock, the finest of the wheat;
 And still he asks his own, with gentlest pleading,
 To lay their highest hopes and talents at His feet,
 He'll not forget the feeblest service, humblest love—
 He only asks that of our store we give Him
The Best We Have.

Christ gives the best. He takes the hearts we offer,
 And fills them with His glorious beauty, joy, and peace,
 And in his service we are growing stronger—
 The calls to grand achievement still increase.
 The richest gifts for us on earth or in the heaven above,
 Are hid in Christ. In Jesus we receive
The Best We Have.

And is our best too much? O friends let us remember
 How once our Lord poured out His soul for us,
 And in the prime of His mysterious manhood
 Gave up His precious life upon the cross!
 The Lord of lords, by whom the worlds were made
 Through bitter grief and tears gave us
The Best We Have.

BOLL'S LESSONS ON HEBREWS.

A volume on the above epistle, handy and helpful, interesting and inspiring, pleasant and profitable to read. Both language and price within reach of common people. Get it. You need it. A splendid Christmas gift. See ad. elsewhere. S. C.

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NO. 12.

NEWS AND NOTES.

The reprint we have promised from Alexander Campbell on the Millennium shall not be delayed forever, Lord willing. Watch for it.

D. H. Friend reports a pleasant meeting at Russellville, Ala., with 19 added. From there he went to Dunmor, Ky., for a series of sermons.

Nobody objects when they get our paper but a number object when they do not. We like that. If you miss a copy *be sure to send in your complaint.*

Our new up-to-the-minute mailing system, which our increasing circulation demands, will be ready in January. This will eliminate almost all complaints of that nature.

J. B. Lashlee conducted a good meeting at Bickel's Cove, Ark., in November. There were eleven baptisms.

We need more January and October Magazines. Who will supply us?

Ben Harding has moved to Sheffield, Ala., giving his full time there, and the work is growing steadily, so writes D. H. Friend.

We would like to have J. P. Merritt's address—wherever he is; also that of M. Leighter.

From W. J. Johnson: "A K. Ramsay, of New Orleans, has just closed a very successful meeting at Amite, La. The members were encouraged and plans laid for the building of a house of worship. Pray for us."

Louis Patmont had a fine week's meeting at Dugger, Ind. From there he went to Cincinnati, whence come good reports of his work. He is to move there January first to labor with the brethren at that place.

W. F. Neil, of Canada, has moved to Louisville to become evangelist of the Parkland church. He inaugurated his work there with a two-week's meeting.

"Owing to the enormous increase in the cost of manufacture, we have been compelled to advance the prices," etc. So say our Bible publishers. Already we are in receipt of the new prices, in many cases an increase of 25 per cent., and already we have our new advertisements made up accordingly for next month. But we withhold them until the Christmas trade is past.

Orville Bixler, of Emporia, Kan., writing of a Student Volunteer meeting says: "One of the workers from India said that a community several miles ahead of where he was working had been calling on him to bring Christ to them, but he had his hands absolutely full where he was; at the end of a year he received this message from them: 'We have begged and waited for your Christianity and you will not come; now we are turning to Mohammed.' Then this man asked, 'At whose hands will these people's blood be required?' Is it any wonder Bixler adds: 'I get more stirred over this question every day?'"

If you are in the market for a portable typewriter or a good circular-letter printing machine, both used, this office can put you in touch.

Let us fill your Christmas orders for Bibles and books. We think we can supply you with any book obtainable elsewhere. If in doubt about suitable gift books, ask us to suggest and describe.

We can supply you with your favorite Help on the 1917 International Lessons:

The Sunday School Times (but see page 1, this issue)	\$1.50
Peloubet's Select Notes, postpaid	1.25
Torrey's Gist of the Lesson (vest-pocket)25
Word and Work Lesson Helps, per year to one address25

In lots of 20 or more mailed monthly, one cent each.

R. L. Dunagan writes from Horse Cave, Ky: "E. C. Fuqua, of Olathe, Col., closed a very fine meeting with Green's Chapel Church of Christ on Nov. 5. Four baptisms, two restorations and one by letter. Pray for us."

"You may report a decided increase in our attendance at Bible School, in our regular contributions, and in general interest at Galatin. Also that the children here contributed \$14.00 to the Christmas ship for the Armenians last Lord's Day. We are raising three thousand dollars on our indebtedness this month. Fifteen hundred was raised last Lord's day." H. L. Olmstead.

"Have been thinking for some time would send a few words by way of report for Word and Work. Have just closed our first year's work with the Central Church in Chattanooga. The work is progressing very well we think. Good interest is manifested in the Bible classes and shop meetings. The Central Church spent eight weeks during the summer in tent work with good results. East Tennessee needs much gospel preaching. Pray for us."

E. H. HOOVER.

EPHRAIM'S IDOLATRY.

H. L. OLMSTEAD.

1. *When Ephraim was right.* "When Ephraim spoke trembling, he exalted himself in Israel." This result is in strict accord with one of God's great principles of dealing, "Whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted." Jehovah has said, "unto this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Isa. 66:2. Again, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word." Isa. 66:5 As long as Ephraim kept this attitude toward God they were exalted in Israel. They possessed honor and dignity—their position was one to be greatly desired. Had they but recognized the fact that their success was from Jehovah, all would have been well. The power of raising up and casting down is God's. "Without me ye can do nothing." So long as we stand in fear of the Lord—with that fear which is solemn respect for His word and profound reverence for His name, we have a right to expect His blessing. Ephraim's very life depended upon God and it is the same with His church. The fruitfulness of Christians and the success of the church is dependent upon God and there must be this attitude of heart which "speaks trembling" before the Church of God is in the way of successful work and service. The first downward step in the awful descent of the Gentile world portrayed so vividly by the Apostle Paul in Rom. 1, was that men "became unthankful." They no longer reckoned that God was the source of their blessings. When disciples of Christ are fully conscious of the fact that their being exalted depends upon maintaining the spirit of humility we may expect not merely "greater things for God," but greater things from God.

2. *When Ephraim went wrong.* "But when he offended in Baal he died." An awful change came, and with it the consequent awful result—death. There came a time in Ephraim's history when they ceased to tremble at God's word, when they ceased to speak trembling. God was forgotten. Because of their blessings they forgot the source of them and turned to other gods. In turning to Baal they turned away from God. It cannot be both; it must be either the one or the other. "What concord hath Christ and Belial?" To listen to Baal they must needs cease to hear God. Baal and not God must now renew their homage and devotions. The God who had brought them out of Egypt, who had known them in the wilderness and the land of great drought (vs. 4, 5, 6) was forgotten and their heart became exalted. No stronger comment can be made on the depravity of the human heart than the fact that the very blessings which God pours out are often the cause of our forgetting God. When in our more serious moments we are certain that all our joys, riches and blessings have come from God, yet we become proud and seek elsewhere for satisfaction.

3. *God is not mocked.* "Whoso exalteth himself shall be abased." God would show them that there was no other God and that He was their only Savior. (verse 4). Instead of being exalted

in Israel they would be as a passing morning cloud or like the fading dew, or like the chaff before the whirlwind (v. 3) and the smoke from the chimney. He would become unto them as the leopard, the bear or the lion. "Our God is a consuming fire." Not forever can men regard not Jehovah and refuse to consider the work of His hands. When men forsake God they may expect His chastisements. The lesson that He alone is Jehovah and that help is only in Him must be learned even though He must pass us through the flood of His anger and the fire of His judgments. Israel had destroyed herself. God mourned over the desolation before her and called her unto Him. It is He alone who can save them and it is He who must be their king, (vs. 9, 10) but their sin was bound up and laid up in store. (v. 12). The judgment came and O what suffering and humiliation they had to endure. How much our happiness depends upon holding the right attitude toward God! It all depends upon it.

HISTORY OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN CHURCH WORSHIP.

STANFORD CHAMBERS

"The general introduction of instrumental music can certainly not be assigned to an earlier date than the fifth century." "The first organ is believed to have been used in church service in the thirteenth century." "Organs were in use before this in theatres. They were never regarded with favor in the Eastern church and were vehemently opposed in the Western churches." "The early reformers when they came out of Rome, removed them as monuments of idolatry. Luther called the organ an 'ensign of Baal.'" Extracts from McClintock and Strong's Encyclopedia. "Because the organ was a means of enjoyment by society in general, its use was rejected in early Christian circles. Smaller organs were at first employed before singing classes, especially in cloisters, to fix the correct tone, and the first large organ of which there is certain knowledge was that erected under Charlemagne in the cathedral at Aix-la-Chapelle.

"The organ first came into close connection with the worship of the Evangelical Church as the leader of congregational singing, musically styled as the choral devotions. However, this connection is an actual, not an essential or necessary one, being due to practical needs and resulting from expediency. In fact, the Evangelical service was long carried on without the organ, not only in the Reformed Church, but for more than a century in the Lutheran Church. * * * The custom of organ accompaniment did not become general until the eighteenth century. * * * At first the organ only accompanied the singing of the congregation for a few lines and then stopped when the song was under way. Later, on account of confusion, the organ was allowed to accompany the whole hymn, and finally the instrument completely overshadowed the congregational song."—*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*.

Thomas Aquinas: "Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize." Bingham's Ant., Vol. 3, p. 137.

Erasmus, a contemporary of Martin Luther: "We have brought into our churches, a certain operose and theatrical music; such a confused, disorderly chattering of some words as I hardly think was ever in any of the Grecian or Roman Theatres. The church rings with the noise of trumpets, pipes, and dulcimers; and human voices strive to bear their part with them. Men run to church as to a theatre, to have their ears tickled. And for this end organ makers are hired with great salaries, and a company of boys, who waste all their time in learning these whining tones." Com. on I. Cor. 14:19.

John Calvin: "Musical instruments. * * * would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps and the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Papist, therefore, have foolishly borrowed, this, as well as many other things, from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise; but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostles is far more pleasing to him. Paul allows us to bless God in the public assembly of the saints, only in a known tongue (I. Cor. 14:16) * * * What shall we then say of chanting, which fills the ears with nothing but an empty sound? Com. on Ps. 33.

Theodore Beza, Genevan scholar and translator, friend and coadjutor of Calvin: "If the apostle justly prohibits the use of unknown tongues in the church, much less would he have tolerated these artificial musical performances which are addressed to the ear alone, and seldom strike the understanding even of the performers themselves." Girardeau's Ins. Music, p. 166.

Joseph Bingham, author of "Antiquities of the Christian Church": "Music in churches is as ancient as the apostles, but instrumental music not so." Works, Vol. 3, p. 137.

Lyman Coleman, Congregationalist: "The tendency of this (instrumental music) was to secularize the music of the church, and to encourage singing by a choir. Such musical accompaniments were gradually introduced; but they can hardly be assigned to a period earlier than the fifth and sixth centuries. Organs were unknown in church until the eighth or ninth century. Previous to this, they had their place in the theater, rather than in the church. They were never regarded with favor in the Eastern church, and were vehemently opposed in many places in the West." Primitive Church, pp. 376, 377.

Prof. John Girardeau, a Presbyterian and Professor in Columbia Theological Seminary: "The church, although lapsing more and more into defection from the truth and into a corruption of apostolic practice, had no instrumental music for 1,200 years (that is it was not in general use before this time); * * * the Calvinistic Reformed Church ejected it from its services as an element of popery, even the Church of England having come very nigh to its extrusion from her worship * * * It is heresy in the sphere of worship." Instrumental Music, p. 179.

John Wesley: "I have no objection to the instruments being in our chapels, provided they are neither seen nor heard."

Adam Clarke, Methodist, author of one of our best commentaries: "I am an old man, and I here declare that I never knew them to be productive of any good in the worship of God, and have reason to believe that they are productive of much evil. Music is a science I esteem and admire, but instrumental music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music, and I here register my protest against all such corruption of the worship of the Author of Christianity."

Charles H. Spurgeon: "Praise the Lord with the harp. Israel was at school, and used childish things to help her to learn; but in these days, when Jesus gives us spiritual food, one can make melody without strings and pipes * * * We do not need them. They would hinder rather than help our praise. Sing unto him. 'This is the sweetest and best music. No instrument like the human voice.'" Comments on Ps. 42:4. Spurgeon says: "David appears to have had a peculiarly tender remembrance of the singing of the pilgrims and assuredly it is the most delightful part of worship and that which comes nearest to the adoration of heaven. We might as well pray by machinery as praise by it."

Alexander Campbell: "That all persons who have no spiritual discernment, taste, or relish for their spiritual meditations, consolations, and sympathies of renewed hearts, should call for such aids is but natural * * * So to those who have no real devotion or spirituality in them, and whose animal nature flags under the oppression of church service, I think that instrumental music would be not only a desideratum, but an essential prerequisite to fire up their souls to even animal devotion. But I presume, to all spiritually-minded Christians such aids would be as a cow bell in a concert." (Millennial Harbinger, 1851, page 581).

Isaac Errett, in Harbinger of 1861: "That melody in the heart is the great end to be sought, and that artistic excellence is only valuable as may conduct to that end. That the highest artistic skill in sacred music has somehow been generally associated with the lowest spiritual culture, and has been far more promotive of sensuous than of spiritual attractions. That the genius of this reformatory movement, like that of previous reformations, is not favorable to choir singing and instrumental music. Its sympathies are with bewildered and sin-oppressed masses, and it wants 'music for the million.' Its original power will be largely lost when the stirring melodies of its early days shall have been supplanted by stately artistic performances. As the church of Christ is the common home of all his people—'Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free,' who are all one in Christ Jesus—' and as singing is the only part of worship in which the great mass of Christians can personally participate, no choir singing or instrumental music should ever be allowed to interfere for a moment with this privilege and right of the saints."

WORDS BY THE WAY.

E. L. JORGENSON.

I would like to express emphatically my disapproval of that theology that teaches the New Testament merely as a law like Moses'—only different; that the principle of both is just the same—only the requirements are different. The Gospel is not like the law in the same sense that the law of Kentucky is like the law of Tennessee. Viewed merely as a law what possible advantage attaches to Christ's over Moses? Are the requirements not as strict, and is the New Testament not as exacting? (Mt. 5:21, 22, 27, 28). If it were easier to *be* right than to *do* right; to control the heart than the hand; to be good inwardly, then the New Testament viewed as a law merely, would have its advantages. The notion is exact that "grace" is just another name for New Testament law; and thus with one stroke the whole meaning of "grace" as contradistinguished from "law" is denied. It is said that we are saved by grace in that grace contrived the plan, framed the Gospel law and presented it to us. But is that not all true of the Mosaic?

Now it is not denied that there are commandments in the New Testament. There are many. But it was not the primary purpose of Jesus to bring men a new law; it was His purpose on earth to bring men what they needed more, a new life. "I am come that they may have life and may have it abundantly," said He. The law was intended for men in the flesh, men of the natural life. That law was of itself, as a moral code, "holy and righteous and good." (Rom. 7:12). But it was "weak through the flesh" (8:3). The grappling hook was strong enough, but there was nothing in the old life to grip unto that would hold. Jesus proposed therefore to bring first of all a new life, a Divine nature, capable of doing the Divine Will. And it was in order to provide a suitable code for the new life, for man in his regenerated nature, that the New Testament law was given. The Law is the outgrowth of the Life. Life first, then law. Primarily the Gospel puts at our disposal this life; afterward, it provides the law for the life. It shows what course the Life is to take. It is a law which is to be kept not so much in order to salvation, as because of it. No unsaved person is expected to keep it, or could do so. Salvation first—not on the Old Testament principle, "He that doeth them (the commandments) shall live in them"; but salvation as a gift by faith (Rom. 1:16, 17); then a life of obedience to the Divine Law.



But the Lord Jesus brought not only a new law and a new life; but he brought men the power to live that life, and to keep that law. Therefore Paul says: "I thank him that enableth me"; and again, "I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me;" and again, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and again, "My strength is made perfect in weakness;" and again, "Ministering of the strength which God supplieth;" and again, "Strengthened with all power by his Spirit in the inward man."

TIMELY THINGS

(Said by Word and Work Editors during the year).

And what is *essential*? Let us be liberal. A few chapters from the gospels, say; sufficient to introduce us to the Lord, and inform us who He is, what He is; what He came for; how He accomplished it; the first four verses of 1 Cor. 15, summing up *the gospel*; Acts, the second and eighth chapters; with a bit from the epistles here and there—Rom. 12, Col. 3—all told perhaps twenty-five chapters of the New Testament—really considerably less: I think it could be reduced to that many verses, which are *absolutely essential* to salvation. Why then read, why study, why teach, why preach the rest? Why not throw the portions not strictly essential away? It is safe to say about half the controversies, arguments, disagreements, arise on those matters without which in an emergency, one could be saved. Why then not abolish the whole of them?—Boll. (May).

The Pharisees put Satan's label on Jesus' good works. Unable to "withstand the wisdom with which He spoke," unable to deny the reality of the power He displayed and unable to ascribe it to mere human agency they had to find some way to turn men's minds or all would believe on Him. Satan suggested the capital idea of putting on the wrong label.* * * Woe unto him who would put skull and cross bones on any portion of the word. Beware of the false label device and resort not hither.—Chambers (January).

It is rank foolishness for the Church to be seeking out the nostrums concocted by the devil whether of ancient or modern origin. Socialism, Christian Science, Russellism, Theosophy, New Theology, Spiritism, New Thought, Hegelianism, are nothing but human attempts to find out God, and are all based upon the false theory of man's sufficiency—an idea born of the devil. Militarism, commercialism, capitalism, graft, commercialized and uncommercialized vice, free love, war, poverty, crime, drunkenness, greed, marital infidelity, are but some of the fruits sown by Satan in Eden.—Olmstead (May).

If it is true, or if the brethern can be led to believe that it is true, that any doctrine, true or false, ought not to be taught if it disturbs the churches—unless it is essential—then any group of men who have any influence at all can completely control the faith of the church. No creed could so absolutely define the limits of belief and hold the churches down to what the leaders believe. For if the churches are convinced that a "non-essential" doctrine should not be taught if it causes trouble, then all the leaders have to do is to see that it *does* cause trouble, which they could always easily do if the doctrine crosses their views. There you have it. Could any creed so completely regulate the faith of the churches as that?—Jorgenson (March).

THE OLIVET SERMON.

R. H. B.

MATTHEW'S RECORD.

The four gospels treat the truth of Jesus' person, life, work, and teaching, each from the point of view of a particular purpose, bringing out special features, more or less prominently, according to the aim in view. So in Matthew's record of the Olivet Sermon some of the features are set forth in fullness and prominence, which Luke or Mark barely touch; on the other hand, some features which the others put in prominence are omitted; and other portions which they did not record are added.

Matthew's report of our Lord's prophetic sermon is on the whole the fullest and richest in detail. It is also, and for the same reason, more difficult than the other two. For this is the Jewish gospel, and frequently presupposes an acquaintance with the Old Testament prophecies; and some references are made in it which are enlightening only to those who have a previous knowledge of prophetic teaching. So we have not quite as simple a task before us here as that in the case of the study of Luke's briefer record which was addressed more especially to the Gentiles.

Matthew sets forth the three questions of the disciples more fully and exactly than either Mark or Luke. When tabulated, and the ellipsis supplied, they stand thus:

1. When shall these things (the destruction of the temple) be?
2. What shall be the sign of thy coming?
3. What shall be the sign of the end of the world (consummation of the age)?

The occasion that called forth these three questions was the Lord's prediction about the buildings of the temple—that not a stone of them should be left upon another. That of course meant not only the destruction of the temple, but of the whole city as well. For not until broken to pieces could the Jewish people permit ruthless hands to be laid on their sanctuary; nor could the citadel of the temple be touched until the city had perished. Now it must be clear that in some way in the minds of the disciples the thought of this catastrophe had associated itself with the "end" and the coming again of the Lord Jesus. The latter may have been suggested by the last words of the Woe-sermon which the Lord had just pronounced upon the Scribes and Pharisees, his lament over Jerusalem which He concludes with the prophecy, "Ye shall not see me henceforth till (and here is Israel's "until" again) ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. 23:39). On former occasions also He had mentioned His coming. Of the end of the age also had they heard (Matt. 13:39, 40, 49, 50), and they had understood it to be a time of judgment.

The connection of thought between the destruction of Jerusalem, the end of the age, and the coming of the Messiah may have been deeper. The Old Testament prophets persistently foretold a terrific tribulation and ensuing deliverance, followed by glorious

restoration, and a golden age. The Scriptures are too many to cite. See for examples, Isa. 4:2-6; 29:1-8; Jer. 30:4-9; Dan. 12:1, 2; Zech. 14:1-9. The latter passage particularly pictures Jerusalem in extreme distress, besieged, and actually taken—when, suddenly Jehovah with His holy ones, comes down to fight for Jerusalem, and the glorious kingdom age is ushered in. Such were some of the Old Testament predictions that would have led the disciples to expect the coming of the Messiah and the End of the Age in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem.

When now we look at the Lord's sermon we perceive that He took these questions up in reverse order; that is He answered their last question ("What shall be the sign of the end of the age?") first. For after the same preliminary warning against impostors which is recorded by Luke, and the same reassurance concerning "wars and rumors of wars" which he told them would be no sign of the immediate end, He foretells a great persecution, and a world-wide preaching of "this gospel of the kingdom;" after all of which he said, should *the end come*. In this first part of the discourse (verses 4-14) "the end" is mentioned three times: "the end is not yet" (v. 6); "he that endureth to the end" (v. 13); "then shall the end come" (v. 14). After this, this term "the end" is not mentioned again in so many words (although the end is in fact described again under the answer to the second question). It is evident then that this first division of the Lord's sermon running down to Matt. 24:14, answers directly the question about "the end." It is just as evident that the next division (from verse 15 and on) refers to *the coming* (see verses 27, 30, 33, 37, 39, 42, etc.) and answers the middle question: "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" The consideration of the remaining question, "When shall these things (i. e. the destruction of the temple and the city) be?" we must leave until we have studied the other two.

SIGNS OF THE END.

In answer to the question, "What shall be the sign . . . of the end of the world?" (always keeping in mind the marginal rendering, "age," instead of "world")—the Lord Jesus begins as in Luke's record, with a warning against impostors. "Take heed that no man lead you astray. For many shall come in my name, saying I am the Christ; and shall lead many astray." (Matt. 24:4, 5). The thing is an imposture on the face of it. The Christ will come in no such manner as that, when He comes again. Still that very sort of imposition is even now being practiced; and that Theosophical movement which was launched in Benares, India, called "The Order of the Star of the East," is preparing humanity for more and greater deception along that line. But these verses are general and introductory, as is also the following verse: "And ye shall hear of wars and of rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet." These "wars and rumors of wars" are no sign of the nearness of the end. Such things are too common of occurrence to serve as an indication; but the real sign must be something extra-

ordinary—namely a *world-war*. “For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places.” (v. 7). I am aware here that naturally in reading these verses (6 and 7) in connection we would regard verse 7 as a mere continuation of verse 6—as if He meant to say—“When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; such things have to be, and signify nothing as to nearness of the end. For nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom—but all that sort of thing is merely the beginning of travail.” Such would be the natural impression at first sight. But Luke’s arrangement puts a different construction upon the same language—and a construction which does not at all clash with Matthew as we shall see. In Luke’s account a clear distinction is drawn between the “wars and rumors of wars” which signify nothing, and the world-war which *does* signify something, as to the nearness of the end. (See last month’s article, on Luke’s report of the Olivet Discourse). And with Luke’s rendering to aid us, we can see that Matthew’s language lends itself to the same interpretation, as is readily shown by supplying a few words, as follows:

“And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for these things must needs come to pass, but the end is not yet. For (when the end finally *does* draw near) nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom,” etc.

Upon further examination we perceive that even Matthew’s context requires such a construction. For why does he say, “These things are the beginning of travail?” Can verse 8 sum up verses 6 and 7 both? Does he mean that all the wars and rumors (that have indeed been of common occurrence all these centuries) were the beginning of travail? Is not “travail” the “birth-pang,” and is not the beginning of travail the beginning of the end, the birth-throes of the great consummation? What sense could there be in calling the common, frequent happenings of all the years “the beginning of the travail”? It seems evident enough that “the beginning of travail” must have reference to some special thing, which is out of the common order. So this “beginning of travail” refers to the international conflict mentioned in verse 7, and not to the general and common conditions of verse 6. The two are not the same. And this is clearly set forth in Luke, whose report sets off the prediction of this world-war as distinct from the sporadic wars and fightings which have marked the course of all the centuries. I have taken special pains to bring out this noteworthy fact, not because it materially affects the rest of the interpretation, but because it establishes a harmony between Matthew and Luke as to the first land-mark of the End, the “beginning of travail.” The general and simultaneous rising up of nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom marks the commencement of the convulsions and paroxysms of terrific and world-wide judgments, that will issue in the birth of a new age and order of things, brought about by the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour

Jesus Christ. The sum of it, then, is that the "wars and rumors of wars" are not to be taken as signs premonitory of the end: "the end is not yet"; but the rising of nations in the world-conflict is the beginning of travail. The former are without special significance; but the latter introduce the final birth-throes.

Then Matthew's record predicts a bitter persecution of the Lord's faithful ones. (Verses 9, 10). This is *not* the persecution of which Luke speaks in Luke 21:12-19. Matthew's is at the time (or next after) the world-war. Luke tells us distinctly that the persecution he speaks of is to transpire *before* the world war. (Luke 21:10-12). Luke's persecutions precede the destruction of Jerusalem; but Matthew's belong to the end (Matt. 24:13). Luke's have long since transpired; Matthew's are yet awaiting fulfillment. Discriminations like these may seem to some to be too careful and exact. I am deeply convinced that God's word carries more significance than we are aware of; and it is just by observing *His* careful distinctions, that we shall be enabled to obtain the true conception of these matters. Matthew describes a terrific testing time for the professional followers of the Lord. Within, without, and round about, the temptations and trials will play. Many shall stumble, and shall deliver up and hate their brethren. False teachers shall come with all the deceitfulness of Satanic power (comp. v. 24; 2 Thess. 2:9, 10). The prevalence of iniquity will chill the love of the majority. He only that stands the tests and maintains faith and love to the End shall be saved (Vs. 10-13).

Then follows the final sign: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the End come (Matt. 24:14).

We shall at a later time take this last mentioned sign into very careful consideration. For the present we take it at its very simplest and plainest import; which is patent to every man; and so conclude our present study of the Lord's predictions concerning the Signs of the End. The next study will have for its theme our Lord's answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?"

THE WAY OF TRUTH.

It must be evident to a man who thinks, that truth is a living, growing thing; that no man has all of it; and that all must follow on to know it more perfectly, and that no man can afford to stop in this path "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," and say, "It is enough—I will have no more." For truth cannot be held independently of its Source any more than sunshine can be preserved and stowed away in vessels, apart from the sun. Our fathers could not acquire the truth and bequeath it to us as their possession. They could only show us what they had learned, and commend us to God and to the word of His grace. So it is the Christian's task and privilege to go on in the word of God, and to believe, teach, treasure and practice all that he finds there.

FOLLOW AFTER PEACE.

J. EDWARD BOYD.

One thing which should be a prominent characteristic of the followers of Jesus is a peace-loving, peace-seeking disposition. "Let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another." (Rom. 14:19). "Be at peace among yourselves." (1 Thess. 5:13). "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men." (Rom. 12:18). Peace, then, among ourselves who are within, and peace with those who are without—to this end let us strive with all diligence. Nothing should be held more dear—except truth and principles of righteousness. For it should be well understood that however high is the estimate which is rightly placed upon peace, there is the one price which cannot be paid; no sacrifice of truth, no compromise with error, should be made to attain it. But such is the perversity of human nature that the very price which should not be paid, men are often the most willing to pay.

"Be at peace among yourselves." No matter of mere personal preference or privilege, no private ambition, no individual right, should be permitted to disturb the peace of God's people. It is better to suffer wrong, actually to be defrauded, than to present the disgraceful spectacle of "brother going to law with brother, and that before unbelievers" (1 Cor. 6). Indeed this does not please the natural man; he thinks rather that he must "stand up for his rights," "get all that is coming to him," look out for number one," etc. Only the man of faith, in whom is the spirit of Christ, can receive this teaching. "He that is of God heareth God's words."

Abram furnishes us a beautiful example of the man who is willing to surrender personal advantage to preserve peace with a brother. (Gen. 13). "Let there be no strife for we are brethren." If ever a man was in a position to assert his own rights and to contend for them, certainly Abram was at this time; for to him and to his seed had God promised this land. What claim did his nephew have? But instead of following such a course—the course which so strongly appeals to the natural man—he said. "Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou take the right hand, then I will go to the left." Most ungratefully, so it seems, did Lot take advantage of this generous offer, choosing the best of the land for himself. Did this cause resentment in Abram's heart? Later he rescued Lot from Sodom's enemies, who had taken him captive; and when he learned God's purpose respecting Sodom, he became an intercessor in Lot's behalf. Lot had met these misfortunes, too, as a result of his selfish choice at the instance of Abram's generosity. But Abram could well afford to allow him to take the choice; only, however, because he himself was a man of faith and had his portion in Jehovah.

"Follow after peace with all men." Not only are we exhorted

to be at peace among ourselves, but we are also to seek to maintain such an attitude toward them who are without. "Resist not him that is evil," said Jesus. Such teaching certainly leaves no ground for a Christian's engaging in or taking any part in the strifes and contentions, the wars and tumults, of this world, however justifiable or unavoidable they may seem to the natural mind. To obey our Lord—our ruler—we must refuse to be drawn into such things.

An incident in the life of Isaac well illustrates our correct attitude toward the men of the world, and our proper dealings with them. Isaac had been dwelling in Gerar; he had become very great; and Abimelech had said to him, "Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we." So it is evident that no element of fear or sense of weakness influenced his conduct toward them. "And Isaac departed thence, and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father. . . . , And the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours.'" Here was just ground for a quarrel surely. For certainly it was rightfully his; whether by right of promise, of inheritance, or of the labor of his own servants. But how did he answer their claim? *By digging another well.* "And for that they strove also." Surely he has borne long enough with them now! Surely now must the "stand for his rights," and defend his possessions against encroachments! But no; for "he removed from thence, and digged another well." And when it became clear that he was to be let alone in the possession of this third well, Isaac made a statement which reveals the faith that made it possible for him so to conduct himself toward them: "For now Jehovah hath made room for us."

Now Jehovah could have made room for them at the first; but for some good reason He did not do so. He rather allowed the faith of Isaac to be tested by these circumstances; and may not such circumstances now arise to test the faith of God's people? For is not "the God of Isaac" our God even today? May we then obey Him in all things, trusting that in His own good time He will make "room for us."

Not only those who belong to the sects and parties of Christendom are sectarians, but those also who are of a sectarian heart, and maintain a partisan spirit. It is one thing to be loyal to "the cause," or "the brotherhood," and another to be loyal to Jesus Christ and the word of God. The two are not compatible. The aims and thoughts of "the brotherhood" are always imperfect, influenced more or less by misconception and even by the pull of the world. But the Lord Jesus Christ is always right, and God's word is always true. We cannot serve two masters. But he who is loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ is necessarily loyal to the best interests of the brotherhood also to build it up in righteousness and truth; yea and to the best interests of all men everywhere.

BIBLE STUDY COURSE.

R. H. B.

“A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic like the sun;
It gives a light to every age;
It gives, but borrows none.”

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

FIRST DAY.—*Samuel's Birth*.—1 Sam. 1. The beginning of this narrative falls in the days of the Judges (Cp. Ruth 1:1). What sort of times those were in general, see Judges 21:25. Samuel was one of the five children of promise of which the Bible tells us. See last month's lessons, where, in connection with Samson, the other four are mentioned. Verses 10, 11, Hannah's vow. Cp. Judg. 13:5; Numb. 6. Verse 18 suggests Hannah's faith. V. 20 gives the reason for Samuel's name.

SECOND DAY.—*Light and Darkness*. 1 Sam. 2. First, Hannah's song of gratitude (vs. 1-10). This is the glorious part of the chapter. Second, the sons of Eli (vs. 12-36). This is the gloomy part. I. “Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord.” 1 Cor. 1:31. See how Hannah does this throughout her song. How Jehovah reverses conditions, vs. 4-8. Comp. Ps. 75:4-7. Read also Mary's song, Luke 1:46-55. These inspired outbursts declare the ways of God. Verse 10 is a prophetic vision of the sure issue of God's work on the earth. II. Eli's sons. See what a very remarkable thing is said about these two men, V. 12. What is meant? Had they never heard, or been instructed? What then? (Comp. Jer. 2:8; 9:6; John 16:3; 2 Thess. 1:8). Their actions proved it. 1 John 2:3, 4.—The dark picture is relieved in vs. 18-21. Mark the last sentence of v. 21. How good a place for a child to grow up? Can we see to it that *our* children shall “grow up before Jehovah”? V. 23. Eli was entirely too easy-going in the matter. The rebuke was too mild. The latter part of v. 25 shows how God prepares men for judgment. Lam. 3:65. Cp. 2 Thess. 2:11, 12, Vs. 27-36, the message of “the man of God.” 27, 28 shows how responsibility goes with privilege. Note how God holds *Eli* responsible, although personally he had not shared in his sons' wickedness. V. 29 shows what a parent does who lets his sons go unrestrained. Mark the “*but now*” in v. 30, and compare it with Jeremiah's announcement of God's principles (Jer. 18:7-10). V. 32 shows that God would rather expose His sanctuary to disgrace than to shield and shelter His servants in their wickedness—a lesson for ever to those who trust in the temple (or in the church) to save them while they live in sin. (Jer. 7:12-15).

THIRD DAY.—*The Call of Samuel*.—1 Sam. 3.—Comp. v. 1 with Am. 8:11, 12. Is the word of God taken away from those who do not appreciate and use it? What then will become of *this present* generation? Note v. 7. “Samuel knew *about* the Lord, but had no personal acquaintance with Him; but 2:12 was

a guilty ignorance. Eli's guilt stated in v. 13. V. 18 shows the humble heart of Eli. There is no ultimate condemnation for such a man, however God may chasten him here below. (Ps. 51:17). Vs. 19 to 4:1 show Samuel established in the high position of *prophet*.

FOURTH DAY.—*The Ark in Captivity.* 1 Sam. 4.—V. 3 may look like faith—in reality it was only presumption. Can *the ark* save those who bear it about in wickedness? Verse 4 is so solemn and significant—an awful verse. The Philistines had a healthy respect for the Ark (vs. 6-8). But see the outcome, vs. 10, 11. How was *God* disgraced among the heathen through the wickedness of His people!" (Cp. Rom. 2:24). Does it ever happen today? Both Eli and his daughters-in-law seemed to be more stricken by the news of the ark being taken, than the death of Hophni and Phinehas. "Ichabod"! Alas that name applies to many a *church* today. Ps. 78:55-61 treats directly upon this affair. And now, Lord, what wilt Thou do for thy great Name in the sight of the nations?

FIFTH DAY.—*The Fortunes of the Ark.*—1 Sam. 5 and 6. In this chapter it becomes evident that God can fight His battles alone better than with the help of a faithless people. V 1—the Philistines found that they had something they did not want. God suffers dishonor (v. 2) but vindicates Himself (vs. 3-5). His hand was upon the people also as well as their god (vs. 6, 7) until the chief problem was what to do with the Ark (v. 8—6:2). The counsel of the diviners was good, and the event justified the plan. God had vindicated Himself and saved the glory of His Name—upon the knowledge and glory of which the salvation and welfare of all the earth ultimately depends. In vs. 19, 20 show His holy impartiality. Not only will He not suffer the Ark in alien hands, but will tolerate no irreverence toward it at the hands of His own people, whom He punishes even more strictly and severely.

SIXTH DAY.—*"Ebenezer."* 1 Sam. 7.—God makes Israel to taste His alienation (v. 2). Vs. 3 and 4 show the only way back into fellowship at any time. Just about that time Satan will raise all manner of trouble (v. 7). But they took refuge in God, and were duly helped (vs. 8-11). Can we set up an "Ebenezer" today? Comp. Phil. 1:6; 2 Tim. 4:20. Vs. 15-17 sum up Samuel's life.

SEVENTH DAY.—*"Give us a King."*—1 Sam. 8. This is one of the pivotal chapters. What was the immediate occasion of their request? (Vs. 1-3). Are failures and bad conditions ever sufficient justification for rejecting the Lord's plans and ways? The last four words of v. 5 (and comp. v. 20) betray the real root of the desire. Now Israel's glorious distinction was that they were *unlike* the other nations (Numb. 23:9), and therein lay their greatness and usefulness (Deut. 33:29). So does the power of the church lie in its distinction from the world. (Rom. 12:2). How did Samuel take the request? (vs. 6). What do *we* do when we are "displeased"? V. 7 shows what the request really amounted to. Had it been anticipated? Deut. 17:14-20. Samuel's solemn

protestation (9-18) ; but the people were determined. Ponder Hos. 13:11.

EIGHTH DAY.—*Saul made King.* 1 Sam. 9 and 10.—In the story of chapt. 9 see how God manages and employs common incidents of every-day life, to bring His purposes to pass. Is not His hand in our lives always? (Rom. 8:28). Note v. 16, "*I will send thee a man.*" But Saul knew nothing of it. He was conscious only of attending to his errand. Saul (cp. Gideon) is "little in his own eyes." The anointing (10:1) ; and see how God equipped him (10:6, 9). The expression in v. 9 however does not mean that Saul was *compelled* to act in accordance with the Spirit's will and power. Later events show that he was free to choose and able to act according to his own will in opposition to God's. Note Saul's reticence, v. 16; and his strange shyness, v. 22. It is not certain that the latter was laudable. Why were the people greatly taken with him? (vs. 23, 24). Men who despise the rightful, God-appointed authority, are always "worthless fellows" in God's eyes, no matter how "brilliant" they may appear. This is true with reference to certain sorts of radical political agitators of to-day, also. Rom. 13:1, 2, 7; Jude 8.

NINTH DAY.—*Saul begins his Reign.* 1 Sam. 11, 12.—Jabesh Gilead's extremity becomes God's opportunity to exalt Saul in the eyes of the people. Read the story (vs. 1-11). Note v. 6. (Comp. Judg. 14:6). Also last sentence of v. 7. This was *God's hand*. V. 12 amounted to an acknowledgment of Saul's kingship; v. 13 shows his magnanimity. Samuel takes the opportunity to "renew the kingdom." Samuel's address is great. Note vs. 12, 13, 17, and 20-25; esp. v. 23. Samuel was a prophet-priest. He stood in a mediatorial office. Had he ceased to pray for the erring people, it would have been a sin against God. Are we priests, and is there an obligation on us to pray for others? (1 Pet. 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:1-4). Does Christ perform His office faithfully on our behalf? (Heb. 7:25).

TENTH DAY.—*The Beginning of Saul's Folly.* 1 Sam. 13, 14.—The situation (vs. 1-7) was trying—but it was Saul's test. God would not have failed him. But did he have any orders to begin this war at all, so far as the record shows? Vs. 8, 9 mark Saul's first great mistake. This was the beginning of his end, as Samuel's speech shows (vs. 11-14). The first intimation of David, "the man after God's own heart" occurs in v. 14. David was yet a shepherd-boy, but God's eye was upon him; Cp. 2 Chron. 16:9. Chapter 14 shows Saul's growing foolishness. His wisdom had begun to fail him. When God marks out a man for honor, He gives him wisdom (1 Sam. 18:5, 14) ; and, vice versa, when the man is rejected to be destroyed, God deprives him of wisdom, and the rest works out of itself. Saul's rashness and hastiness of spirit appears throughout this chapter. Jonathan was right (v. 29). The only victory that day was due to Jonathan's faith. (v. 6, 23, 45). Verses 47-52 give a sum of Saul's work.

ELEVENTH DAY.—*Saul's Rejection.* 1 Sam. 15.—His orders:

vs. 1-3. Can you account for such orders from a *loving* God? Did He ever mark a nation for destruction until their measure was over-full, patience had ceased to be a virtue, and the justice of God and the welfare of humanity demanded their extermination? (Gen. 15:16; Exod. 17:14). Will God do a similar thing again at another (perhaps not far distant) day? Rev. 14:14-20. God appointed Saul executor of this judgment upon Amalek. Did he obey? Vs. 8, 9. Now Jehovah's word to Samuel, and Samuel's wrath and distress. v. 11.—Saul evidently did not think that God would be so *particular* about the exact carrying out His word and will, v. 13; but Samuel soon convinced him. Saul, obeying only so far as pleased him, had really not obeyed at all, v. 19. Can *sacrifice and gifts* make up for *disobedience*? Many indeed seem to think so to this day; but, ah! V. 22 *must be memorized*. V. 23 shows exactly what Saul had done; and this settled Saul's future and destiny.

TWELFTH DAY.—*The Folly of King Saul*.—Instead of taking up David here, let us take a view of the rest and the whole of Saul's life. Note 16:14; 18:8-15; 18:17-20, 25, 27-29; 19:10; 24:16-22; chapt. 28; 31:1-6. Be sure to read these passages over carefully. In 26:21 Saul hits the gist of his failure: "I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly." And the essence of his folly was *Self-Will*. When he hid himself in the baggage; when he assumed the priestly function because his impatience could not wait for Samuel; when he pursued his own course instead of God's in the matter of Amalek; when, after having seen that God was with David, and knowing that *God* had set him apart to be king in his stead. Saul tried his utmost to kill him; when, unable to get response from God he consulted a medium; when, unable to wait until he was slain, he must needs take his own life—at almost every turn of his course Saul showed his folly. *And the folly of King Saul was his self-will*. How shall we not examine our hearts, and pray that God may forgive and cleanse and deliver us from this folly which leads to death, the sin of self-will!

DECLINES THE CHALLENGE.

In a polite letter, our esteemed legal friend, Samuel W. Green, declines our challenge to establish one single case in which Christian Science has cured a deadly disease. In lieu therefore he sends us a copy of a speech by Senator John D. Works, of California, in which is given the names and addresses of a number who give long-distance testimony to the curative power of Christian Science. It will be observed that our challenge did not cover California, but, to the contrary, it was restricted to the confines of our own Commonwealth. We can, however, assure our friend that the items of time and expense are the only ones that prevent us from making our challenge so that it would take in the entire universe, including the wireless and submarine service. At present, however, we are especially concerned with the exploits of these scientific

sorcerers in the domain of Kentucky. Our good friend claims that numbers in this State have been healed of deadly diseases. We flatly and fully deny the truth of this statement. Our legal friend is too well acquainted with the laws of evidence and the worth of testimony, to even need a suggestion in this connection. He knows quite well, the witnesses must appear in person, and testify under oath, and that they are subject to cross-examination by opposing counsel.

Now, then, that our challenge to test the healing power of these necromancers has been declined, we will offer another, through we much fear it will share the fate of the former. We will agree to select two men, our legal friend two others, and the four, a fifth man. One of this number shall be an accredited practicing physician. We stipulate that one of the five shall be a physician, since, according to the common sense of mankind, the physician is the only properly qualified person to disagnose the many different diseases. Because a coterie consisting of far less than one million of the fifteen hundred million of the world's population, discredit the doctor, they cannot be allowed to disqualify him as an expert. This is particularly true in view of the fact that a majority of Christian Scientists have recourse to the physician in serious illness. To object to one of the committee being a physician, is not only to discredit his knowledge, but to impugn his honor. The truth is, Christian Scientists are unwilling to submit their claims, for adjudication, to any but Christian Scientists.

We have offered what, we believe, will be deemed a fair proposition, by any unprejudiced person. Can there be any possible reason for declining this obviously fair offer, save the fact that they themselves know they cannot make good their claims?

If these people can heal deadly diseases, we are more than anxious to know it. If they can, let them promptly accept this manifestly fair proposition; if they will not, let them stand condemned of self-deception, or the wilful deception of others, for revenue only. In our judgment, there are just three classes of Christian Scientists, viz., those who are woefully deceived; those who are mentally unbalanced, and those who are unmitigated frauds. We are charitable enough to believe the second class in a decided majority.

AN INDICTMENT AGAINST CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

1. It denies that Christ has a body, or that His blood was shed for the remission of sins.
2. It teaches that marriage is not the highest state for woman, and that marriage will ultimately be abolished. It is therefore an enemy to the marriage relation.
3. It claims women may have mental conception and bear children without the sexual relation, thus offering a premium on harlotry.
4. The system denies the possibility of arson, or murder; thus condoning these crimes and encouraging criminals.
5. It incites to licentiousness, by denying a material existence.

and that there is such a thing as adultery that should be punishable by law.

6. Its denial of the existence of matters calculated to promote thieving, since only material things can be stolen.

7. It is idoltry, because it places the words of Mrs. Eddy on a parity with the Word of God, and that God cannot be properly discerned without Mrs. Eddy's "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures."

8. By denying the existence of pain, thus breaking the commandment against lying.

9. By denying the existence of disease, and refusing to have a physician, not a few of its followers have crimsoned their hands with their own blood and blood of others.

10. It bears false witness in denying the existence of matter, though a recently received letter from a Christian Scientist was written on material paper, inserted in a material typewriter, and dictated to a stenographer with a material body, and then stamped with a stamp for which he paid material cash, and addressed to the editor of the *Western Recorder*, who knows he has a material body, to which he has had to deny certain luxuries on account of the high cost of living, and which has occasionally suffered from the cost of high living.

May the God of all grace deliver our land and our homes from the consuming curse of Christian Science, falsely so-called.—*Western Recorder*.

NANNIE BARRY CECIL.

It was my privilege to look once more and for the last time upon the earthly form of our gentle, young sister, who fell asleep in Jesus a few days since. A reflection of tenderness and sweetness was still lingring upon her face. She was true and pure and humble and patient, full of goodness and love. She left us too soon. Her young husband, two little ones, a mother and sister who for years past have tasted sorrow upon sorrow, are bitterly bereaved; and our only consolation lies in God whose love will some day justify its ways. But the light of the sweet Christian life that has departed still illumines the hearts of those who knew her, and the memory of her cannot die. E. A. Elam spoke good words of comfort at the funeral services.

R. H. B.

JULIA FRAZIER PRIEST.

Old and full of days, and full of good works as well, Sister Priest of the Highland congregation,, Louisville, fell asleep in Jesus on Nov. 25. It was the fulfillment of her heart's desire, this departure. She was a woman of great simplicity, a pilgrim and stranger on the earth. Chief of all her religious interests perhaps, was her activity—by prayer and liberality—in the work of missions abroad. She was not only a woman "saved by grace" but a woman thoroughly aware of it, unashamed of the gospel. E. L. J.

STUDIES IN PROPHECY.

ABOUT PRE-MILLENNIALISM

R. H. B.

The references one may see here and there in certain religious periodicals may easily leave the impression that Pre-millennialism is one of the many "isms" in the world—some sectarian cult or system of doctrine. This is absolutely not the case. No more than "immersionist" is the adherent and exponent of some peculiar sect or cult, is the "premillennialist." The immersionist is simply one who is not an affusionist—that is, one who believes that baptism is immersion and cannot be performed by sprinkling. The premillennialist is simply one who is not a post-millennialist; that is one who believes that Jesus comes back again before the period of the thousand years' reign, spoken of in Rev. 20:1-6, and that the doctrine that He returns after this period in untrue, and begets a false outlook and attitude. That is all there is of that. All Christians, so far as I am aware, believe in the period sometimes designated by the word "Millennium"; and none believe that Christ will return *during* that period. It remains then that they believe either that His coming is premillennial or postmillennial. I preached on the coming of the Lord, and preached it as premillennial before I had ever even heard the words "pre-" or "post-millennial," and before I even knew that such a distinction had ever been made. And I still preach on it in the same manner and rarely, if ever, mention those terms. If ever a sect of Premillennialists should spring up, or a system of doctrine called Premillennialism, I should feel obliged to disavow all connection and complicity with it—just as I would disavow belonging to the "Immersionist" sect, or would refuse to subscribe to a system of doctrine dubbed "Immersionism." As, for example, I claim no connection with what is called the Baptist church, nor subscribe to Baptist doctrine, although I baptize and believe many things found in the Baptist doctrine. So I am no Premillennialist in a sectarian sense, nor do I hold by any system of doctrine (if there be any such) known as Premillennialism. We beg the privilege of being simply Christians, with the freedom to search and see, to believe and speak, whatsoever God has spoken.

"PREMILLENNIALISM IS NO NEW THING."

In a recent issue of a religious publication we find it stated by way of disparagement, "Premillennialism is no new thing." *That it is not!* New things in the sphere of Christian faith are worse than suspicious. Premillennialism is as old as the New Testament. Postmillennialism, on the other hand, is a doctrine that before about A. D. 1700, was practically, or even entirely unknown. How the very earliest Christians after New Testament times, stood on the matter, appears from the following extract from the standard work, impartial and scholarly, of Prof. Fisher

on "The History of Christian Doctrine" (quoted verbatim, only the dates being supplied) :

"The Second Coming of Christ is looked upon as an event not remote. In one of the parables of Hermas (A. D. 90-100) it is to follow the building of 'the Tower,' and 'the tower,' it is said, 'will soon be built.' The post-communion prayer in the *Dilache* (A. D. 100) ends with 'Maranatha'—"The Lord Cometh.' In Barnabas (A. D. 100) the temporal reign of Christ for a thousand years is expected to follow His advent. Papias (A. D. 130), who cherishes the same idea, presented a fantastic picture of millennial bliss and comfort."

If Papias gave rein to his imagination as to the bliss and comfort of the millennium, it is of course neither more or less excusable than the extravagances sometimes indulged in by modern preachers in discussion of Bible themes, such as "heaven," or "hell." But such excrescences do not in any way affect the validity of the doctrine itself. The fact remains that the very earliest Christians beyond the New Testament days, of whom we have any word and testimony, were staunch and strong premillennialists. If that is now in these days to be condemned as a false doctrine we shall have to turn back and dig up their bones also and burn them; together with bones of some of the godliest, bravest, truest servants of God throughout all subsequent centuries down to the present day. Not that that of itself would prove premillennialism to be true—the scriptures alone can establish that—but it raises no little presumption in favor of it; and above all it proves that, as has been correctly said, "Premillennialism is no new thing!"

WHAT IS PRE-MILLENNIALISM?

The following, somewhat lengthy, but valuable sum-up of the matter is taken from the pen of W. H. Griffith-Thomas, a scholar of high rank. We quote from the *Christian Workers' Magazine*, November, 1916:

1. The New Testament gives no proof of the universal acceptance of the gospel and the gradual improvement of the world till everything is good. On the contrary, there is much that points in the opposite direction, indicating that there will be a growth of good and a growth of evil to the end of this dispensation (Matt. 13:24-30). As a modern writer has pointed out "our Lord nowhere predicts a glorious future before the end of the age." And this is supported by the state of the world today, for while the gospel is ever extending among the heathen, apostasy is extending among the so-called Christian nations, as the present war too plainly indicates.

2. Premillennialism stands for the supreme authority of Scripture and is bound up therewith. Indeed, we do not know of a premillennialist who takes the rationalistic position. Premillennialism bears testimony to the divine inspiration of Scripture in opposition to every tendency of modern scholarship to detract from it.

3. Postmillennialism robs the Christian life of any true ideal and power of the coming of Christ. For if the millennium is to be reached by the gradual progress and improvement of the world, our Lord's coming must be an event in a very remote future. What in these articles do we find in regard to the coming of Christ? Practically nothing. And yet it is one of the most prominent elements of the New Testament and in regard to it we are to watch and wait. How can we do this if the world is to be converted before He comes again?

THE INVENTOR OF POSTMILLENNIALISM.

4. The early church for at least three centuries held firmly to premillennial teaching, and Gibbon, among others, bears testimony to the beneficent influence of this truth when he says that "it was productive of the most salutary effect upon the faith and practice of Christians." Now postmillennialism was invented by a man named Whitby in the time of King James I, and by one who inclined to Unitarianism. He styles his theory "a new hypothesis" and it has had the new effect of blinding modern theology to the purpose of God in this dispensation and has led the church to work along wrong lines and with a false expectation of results.

5. It is not without significance that the church of Rome has always been against premillennialism, and hence these articles taking the same line shows how easy it is for extremes to meet.

6. The fact is that postmillennialism tends towards an erroneous Pelagian view of human nature and pays too much regard to man's powers and ability to accomplish things. We have already called attention to the confession of B. Fay Mills, and another preacher has given expression to the same view when he said:

"My postmillennial dreams of the age becoming better and better seem to be awfully shattered by the corruption and worldliness of the church, and by the downward plunge of society and civil government."

No better testimony to the disastrous influence of a post-millennial attitude can be adduced than that in a new book by Dr. C. E. Jefferson, "What the War is Teaching." Modern civilization is a superficial veneer and only tends to cover for a while the essential depravity of human nature.

WHAT DOES IT MATTER?

7. If it be asked whether it really matters as to our belief in premillennialism or postmillennialism, the reply is that it matters a great deal. In a pamphlet, "Pre- or postmillennialism; Does It Matter," the Rev. R. S. Weston has pointed out that two views develop different habits of mind, different methods of work, different attitudes towards the Bible, and different aspects of life.

Different habits of mind, because postmillennialism puts far away the Lord's coming and tends to make its consideration a waste of time. Different methods of work because postmillennialism works along the lines of development, civilization and education, while premillennialism emphasizes salvation for the individual and insists on everything else arising out of this. Different

attitudes towards the Bible because the two views represent wholly contradictory conceptions of the truth of God. Differences in personal life and hope because premillennialism emphasizes the joy and inspiration of earnest hope as an incentive to holiness.

In conclusion, we commend to the writers of these articles and to all whom they are likely to influence, a book by a Methodist minister, the Rev. J. F. Silver, entitled "The Lord's Return," and the introduction in it by a Methodist bishop, Dr. Hogue. When any writers are able to disprove the contentions found in this book it will be time for premillennialists to capitulate. Meanwhile they are confident and glad to endorse these words by the president of the Methodist Conference of England last year, Rev. Dinsdale T. Young:

"I believe our Lord's imminent return is one of the most spiritually awakening doctrines of Scripture. It is one of the most central themes of the New Testament. Much of the coldness and unspirituality of the churches arises from the lapse of this great doctrine. If our Lord were to leave the skies in second advent glory today, what would our condition be? That great and awful crisis would show us as we are. Multitudes of professing Christians would be scared did the trumpet now sound. Oh how will it be with us when the Lord cometh? Be it ours to look for Him and to love His appearing, then that final crisis will not be our ruin; it will be glory everlasting."

"JESUS IS COMING."

A better compendium of scripture-teaching on the Second Coming of the Lord than the little book entitled "Jesus is Coming," by "W. E. B." can hardly be found. It gathers together in small compass the scripture-passages bearing on the Lord's return, classifies and arranges them with discrimination, in order to set before the reader "the whole counsel of God" on a theme as interesting and important as it is generally underestimated and neglected. The book has its defects, as any work of man must have. There are details in which I would disagree with the author, and he draws an inference here and there in which one cannot follow him. But I take it that no book and sermon can be accepted without discernment. With all allowance, however, this is certainly a most excellent little treatise, and I warmly recommend the same to the attention of all who are interested in the study of the prophecies and particularly the Lord's Second Coming.

Naturally this little work has created some stir and has evoked not only much favorable comment but also some criticism. The following excerpts from a letter from an esteemed and beloved aged brother who has drunk deeply at the fount of God's truth, shows he appreciates the book, but not blindly:

"I have read the book, *Jesus Is Coming*, by W. E. B., an obscure author, but certainly his production is worthy of attention among all Christians. It has some few objectionable features, but in the

main is *the most valuable book* I have yet seen on prophetic teaching."

The italics are mine. But here again is a letter from an able man, a highly esteemed friend and brother, which, while giving the book good credit, expresses some misgivings as to "W. E. B.'s" theology.

"I have been reading 'Jesus Is Coming by W. E. B.' He reasons well, seems to have a grasp upon prophetic teaching, but does not know the 'first principles of the oracles of God.' First principles constitute the alphabet of Christianity. This alphabet is contained in the commission as recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke. If a man undertakes to teach English literature he *must* know the alphabet. Should one undertake to teach arithmetic he *must* know the multiplication table. And so when one aspires to be a teacher of the oracles of God—a 'Declaration of the whole Council of God,' why should not he understand the 'alphabet?'"

"Yet W. E. B., addressing one who is 'not a Christian' and assuring him the 'Crucified Savior is the only hope of salvation,' continues. 'Let me entreat you to repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out,' when he should know that the idea of one 'being converted' is not in the New Testament; and he did not have far to go to 'entreat' a non-christian in language above suspicion or criticism. Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38. How then, can 'W. E. B.' be a safe teacher in any department of our holy religion? And if he is not safe, why circulate his books."

REPLY.

It is not just evident why a man who quotes the King James Version of Acts 3:19, to sinners ("Repent and be converted") and fails to urge Acts 2:38, Mark 16:15, 16 upon them cannot teach soundly on the Lord's Return. Our dear brother is mistaken in his view that the great Commission as recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke, stands in the same relation to the rest of Christian doctrine as the alphabet does to literature, or the multiplication table to mathematics. If, however, W. E. B. had rejected the authority and inspiration of the scriptures—that would be the sort of fundamental error that would vitiate all he could say on any Bible theme. Of if he denied the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ—that would destroy the value of any utterance of his concerning the Lord Jesus Christ's coming or anything else about Him. These would be the vital and fundamental errors, which, like errors in alphabet or multiplication table, would pervade and distort all else. But W. E. B.'s views on conversion and baptism do not directly touch or affect the doctrine of the Lord's Return. A man may be safe on the latter theme, while unsafe on the former *and vice versa*. No man is so "safe" on anything that all he says can be accepted without question or verification. We must always maintain the attitude of the Bereans (Acts 17:11) who "searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so."

R. H. B.

SYMPOSIUM ON THE MILLENNIUM AND RELATED THEMES.

Campbell, Lard, Milligan, Brents, Lipscomb, Harding.

The articles from which these quotations are taken have appeared in the Word and Work within the current year. By examination of the issue cited, readers will be able to see the context of each paragraph, as well as to trace the articles to their original place of publication; and some may be led to read, or re-read our full reprint at least. Most of our readers regard these writers highly; on which account we see a real value in this condensed symposium.

Whatever is taught in the Oracles of God respecting the present or future condition of the Christian profession, demands our most grave and serious consideration. * *

The subject of the Millennium is one of growing importance and of thrilling interest to the Christian community. * *

There are certain preliminary matters, which seem to command the attention of the student of prophecy. Such as—

1. The restoration of Israel to their own land. * * We design to give to this great theme (millennium) much attention, and to spare no pains to assist our readers in the investigation of the prophetic oracles. * * The subject is annually growing in importance, and we feel constrained to contribute our labors to that subject, now annually growing in its claims, and by the signs of the times demanding our special interest and attention. * * * Now is the time for the students of prophecy to keep their vigils, to trim their lamps and watch! * *

A new series is soon to commence, and the signs of the times indicate that it is not far distant. The God of Abraham has said. "Though I make a full end of all the nations (that afflicted Jacob). I will never make a full end of you." Millions of the Jews, known and proved to be such, yet exist, while not a remnant of their oppressors, known as such, is found in the four quarters of the globe. But God has not kept them these many ages for nothing. He will use them again, and yet again bless all the nations of the earth by the seed of Abraham His friend. "If the casting of them away has been the reconciling of the Gentile world, what shall the resumption of them be but life from the dead." We hear a rattling in the valley of dry bones. The Jews are intent on rebuilding their city and their temple, and in returning to their own land.—Alexander Campbell (April).

The millennium will commence in the precise instant in which Satan is bound and locked up in prison. * * At the moment when he falls, the moment when his great bad power is wrested from him, at that moment the millennium will be inaugurated. From that time it will stretch forward and include, in our opinion, a period of a thousand years precisely. It will not consist of an indefinite number of years, or be merely a long time; but of a thousand years, neither more nor less. Of the events which are

further to characterize its commencement we shall now speak more particularly.

1. All the living saints will be changed. * * *
2. The sleeping saints will be raised. * * *
3. The actual personal and literal reappearance of the Saviour. We confidently expect this event to take place in the commencement moment of the millennium. That Christ is to revisit the earth one day, as literally as He left it, is what we think no Bible student can deny without, in the act, avowing a principle, which, if sound, at once extinguishes the truth of Christianity.—Moses E. Lard (June).

From these premises it appears:

1 That there was to be a second gathering together of the Israelites.

2. That it would not be merely from Babylonia, and perhaps from some of the adjacent provinces, as was the case with the first return under Zerubbabel, but from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the Mediterranean; or, in general, from the four corners of the earth.

3. That it is to happen while the Root of Jesse, or the Messiah, shall stand as an ensign for the people; or at some epoch of the Christian era. But this epoch has not yet arrived; Israel is still scattered to the four corners of the earth, and will remain so till the Ottoman power, and all other hindrances shall be taken away.

Still more conclusive and satisfactory is the testimony of Jeremiah, 23:3-8 (which is quoted).

Corroborative of this are the concluding verses of the prophecy of Amos. (quoted).

If anything more is necessary to prove that the children of Israel will again be restored to their own land, it may be found in the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel. * * *

But finally, the apostle having, from various considerations, urged the possibility and the probability of Israel's conversion, at length plainly and categorically affirms it as a fact that will yet certainly occur. Rom. 11:25-31 (quoted).

This, we think, is entirely conclusive. That the word "*Israel*," refers to the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, is sufficiently plain from the context. And "*all*" is evidently used in the sense of *most*, or the greater part.—Robert Milligan (July).

We are now prepared to read our *text* (Rev. 20:4 is quoted). *This is the millennium*. If it does not express a literal reign with Christ for a literal thousand years, we know not what assemblage of words would be capable of expressing that thought. * * *

We have seen that the dead in Christ rise first, and that this is the first resurrection in which none but the blessed and holy will have part. * * * The phrase, *first resurrection*, clearly implies a *second resurrection*, for there cannot be a *first* without a *sec-*

ond. So does the phrase, dead in Christ, imply that there are dead who are not in Christ; and the sentence, the dead in Christ shall rise first, implies that the dead out of Christ will rise afterward. How long afterward? "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Rev. 20:5. This clearly implies that the rest of the dead *will live again* when the thousand years shall be finished. We see not how to resist these conclusions from the premises, or from the Scripture quoted. They are plain statements of Holy Writ, which seem to admit of no other interpretation. It seems to us that the conclusions must be admitted, or the truth of the Scriptures denied.—T. W. Brents (April).

"The kingdom of God" means the realm subject to the rule, or reign, of God. It embraces the universe. The world was created as a part of that kingdom, subject to the rule of God. The world was intrusted to man as the under ruler for God. Man betrayed the trust and turned the rule of earth over to the devil, the rival and enemy of God. God determined to rescue the world from the rule of the devil and to bring it back to his own rule and authority. * * Instead of seeing this connected and glorious growth and development of the kingdom of God through successive preparatory stages of the past and of growth for the future, we insist on disjoining it and looking upon each separate stage as a distinct kingdom, or government. If we would try to view revelation as a continued, but connected, revelation of God, and the different phases and stages of his kingdom as stages and developments of one harmonious, connected whole, it would enable us to understand these things better and to see a beauty and Godlike grandeur that without this we cannot see.—D. Lipscomb (March).

When Christ came the first time no man knew the day nor the hour of His coming; but devout Jews were expecting it, and many false Christs arose because of this expectation. In foretelling His second advent Jesus makes it plain that the world will not expect it, nor be prepared for it; to them He will come as a thief in the night; but it should not be so with regard to His people; He tells them plainly that they should watch, and not be surprised as by a thief; they are to read the signs of the time and be ready. Now it is a notable fact that for the last fifty or sixty years many godly men have believed that the time of His coming is near. Surely we ought to watch, and be ready. * * * have seen numbers of Christians who did not seem to realize that they were in training, being prepared for citizenship in the heavenly Jerusalem, and for a rulership how vast, how extensive and important we know not; they seem not to realize at all that every opportunity should be improved, every moment utilized with all diligence in this preparation. * * We were made for rulers to start with (Gen. 1:27), and the faithful are to be members of the ruling family of the universe.—J. A. Harding (September).

ON FOREIGN FIELDS.

MISSIONARY NOTES.

DON CARLOS JANES.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."
Ecl. 9:10.

Miss Nellie Straiton, 1030 S. Lake street, Ft. Worth, Texas, forwarded to Bro. Armstrong-Hopkins in India \$45 on August 1; on September 1, she sent \$25, and her sister sent \$10 from a Bible class in the South Side church.

A Canadian brother sends \$15 for the India work, requesting that his name be withheld and the words "in the name of Jesus" used instead.

Bro. C. G. Vincent has lately covered more than sixteen hundred miles in the "Mission Ford" a brother gave him. The journey led into southeastern Ohio and West Virginia. Twenty-one churches were visited and a lot of good done.

On September 29, Bro. Jelley wrote: "I hope Bro. Martin will come soon." On November 4, the Martins sailed from San Francisco. When three days out, Sister Martin was reported sick, but Samuel Obadiah said he could eat all he could get. Later: He "fed the fish."

That Texas sister who sent money for Sister Andrews and Bros. McCaleb and Vincent, could preach a good missionary sermon if she were a man. Her letter is good reading.

Bro. I. B. Bradley, Dickson, Tenn., who forwards funds for Miss Sarah Andrews in Japan, sent her \$50 early in November, and hoped to be able to send that much again the twentieth. Her remittances have not been regular.

"Send us a helper," says Bro. McHenry and a brother is willing to go if he can persuade his wife to be willing also.

Louis R. Patmont says there are more idols in Russia than in China. He also says there are 40,000,000 foreigners in the United States. Some of these will likely be helped by Bro. Patmont's settled work in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Those desiring to stimulate missionary activity in their home communities will be supplied with a missionary circular with the names of forty-four preachers attached, by sending postage (5c a hundred) to the writer of this page. Route 10, Buechel, Ky.

Sister McHenry wrote under date of October 5, that Bro. McHenry was out preaching among the Indians with no English speaking person with him. Her letters show that she is well able to attend to her husband's correspondence.

It should be borne in mind that missionary expenses are continual; therefore the giving should be continuous.

Sister C. G. Vincent is reported as "gaining health all the time. Bro. Vincent comes South this month.

WHAT IS MY WORKER DOING?

E. S. JELLEY.

(Forwarded by Brother Langpaap.)

Frequently the inquiry comes, "What is my worker doing?"

In the first place your worker is (if a new one) extremely ignorant of the Bible, although he knows enough of the divine requirements so that he has been baptized for the remission of sins. He therefore is put through a course of instruction, partly by mail and partly by myself, or by an educated brother, that lasts two years. He is not, however, idle all of this time, even during Bible study courses, I send him occasionally to preach, and during nine months of the year, unless confined by sickness, he preaches in two or three villages a week, where there are churches (he has a circuit of ten village churches.) Likewise he answers calls from unevangelized villages and baptizes when desired. He also in all probability teaches school in the village where he resides.

Again it occasionally happens that some brother or congregation asks for a worker and begins to send money forthly, but I have no suitable worker handy. Do I appoint an unsuitable man? Certainly not. What then? Well, I do just what you would do, keep the money and put a man to work when I find one suitable some two, three or even six months later on. Your money is not misappropriated.

Brethren, under serious drawbacks and disadvantages we try to spread the Gospel in this darkened land. On the whole we are fairly successful, but we cannot do the impossible. Kindly compare the results in India with the results in your home town. Also, compare our method of procedure with that recorded in Acts.

There is this matter also, we are sowing seed today with no apparent results which will bring forth fruit in vast masses turning to the Saviour in the future, so we trust. We do not ask every one to help the India work. Use your own judgment in that matter. Perhaps you had better help Japan or Mexico, China, Russia, or some other country (we certainly trust that you do not forget America), but if you help the work in India, kindly be patient and pray for the missionary and your native worker. The work is being done as best I and your worker know how to do it.

In his quaint way, Otoshige Fujimori writes from Japan: "Again, blessing of the Lord, I baptized Brother Hirayama yesterday. The first he heard the gospel was about nineteen years ago. * * * Just think! to obey took him nineteen years. * * * Let us sow the Word of life, it shall reap by and by." Again he writes: "One (of two he had baptized) is my own dear mother. I have been praying for last twenty years."

THE SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF DECEMBER.

Lesson 11.

December 10, 1916.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

Golden Text.—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." Rev. 2:10.

Lesson Text.—"Rev. 2:1-17. Memorize verse 7.

1. To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, he that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks: 2 I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them that call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false; 3 and thou hast patience and didst bear for my name's sake, and hast not grown weary. 4 But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love. 5 Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works: or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent. 6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God. 8 And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These things saith the first and the last, who was dead, and lived again: 9 I know thy tribulation, and thy poverty (but thou art rich), and the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and they are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Fear not the things which thou art about to suffer; behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. 11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. 12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These things saith he that hath the sharp two-edged sword: 13 I know where thou dwellest, even where Satans throne is; and thou holdest fast my name, and didst not deny my faith, even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who

Verse 1. What is meant by the seven stars and seven candlesticks? Rev. 1:20. What is indicated by His holding the stars in his hand? Dan. 5:23, last clause; Ps. 31:15. What is the significance of his walking in the midst of the candlesticks? Comp. Luke 13:6, 7. Verse 2. What does the Lord Jesus know of each church and individual Christian? Did Ephesus work hard? (toil) Can we say that? What is meant by "patience?" See v. 3. What was their attitude toward evil men? What does God teach elsewhere on this? 1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14. What did they do in the case of those who pretended to be apostles (or, as today, "successors of the apostles")? By what did they try them? (Gal. 1:8, 9; 2 John 10). Did Christ approve of their procedure?

Verse 3. In what did their "patience" manifest itself?

Verse 4. What was the one thing the Lord had against this church? What is the "first love?" (Cp. Jer. 2:2). Was that a serious lack? 1 Cor. 13:1-3. Can a church (or a Christian) work, toil and sacrifice without love? But can they love without sacrificing, toiling, working?

Verse 5. What, first of all, did the Lord tell them to do? What good does it do us to remember? What should they do next? How show their repentance? (Cp. Acts 26:20; Matt. 3:8). If they repented not in this matter what would the Lord do? What would that mean? What then does the Lord do to a church that fails in the point of love?

Verse 6. The Lord turns to commendation again—in regard to what point? Were they better at hating than loving? But is it right to hate some things? Jude 23; Ps. 119:104. Did the Lord commend them for hating the Nicolaitans?—or merely their works? Did they have fellowship with Him in this?

Verse 7. Whose words are these? (v. 1). Were the words of Jesus always the words of the Spirit? Acts 1:2; John 3:34. Is it a serious thing to turn a deaf ear to the voice of the

was killed among you, where Satan dwelleth. 14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. 15 So hast thou also some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner. 16 Repent therefore: or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth. 17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh, to him will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it.

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Verse 11. What did these Christians have to overcome? How? Rev. 12:11. Is there a worse death than by sword or flame? What shall be the end of those who try to save their life? Matt. 16:25.

Verse 12. Pergamum. What is that sword? (Rev. 1:16; 19:15. Heb. 4:12.)

Verse 13. Does the Lord know the difficulty of our position? Where does Satan reign? (Luke 4:6; John 14:30; 2 Cor. 4:4). How had they done in spite of those circumstances?

Verse 14. What did the Lord hold against this church? What did Balaam teach Balak? (Num. 31:15, 16; Num. 25).

Verse 15. What teaching similar to Balaam's did they tolerate among themselves?

Verse 16. What must they do? What is the one thing to do when we are found wrong in any respect? Can the word of God slay as well as heal? Rev. 19:15.

Verse 17. What must this church (and each Christian) specially overcome? What sweet food of God is promised to one who refuses the forbidden sweets of sin and self-indulgence? What great distinction to one who refuses the world's false glory, for Christ's sake? Compare Heb. 11:24-26.

NOTES ON LESSON 11.

The questions running alongside of the lesson-text are comment sufficient. But having gone this far in the messages to the seven churches, we would no doubt wish to study the rest of them. Thyatira (2:18-29) has much in her favor, but comes in for serious criticism. The Lord, however, distinguishes between the Jezebel contingent and the rest. The promise to the overcomer is very remarkable. Comp. Ps. 2. Sardis (3:1-6) was to all practical purpose dead, yet could be revived. Here again there is a faithful remnant recognized. The Book of Life contains the names of those who are spiritually alive. Philadelphia (3:7-13) comes in for full and unmitigated praise—only a cautionary admonition (v. 11). Laodicea comes in for unmitigated censure and is in danger of utter rejection. Yet she is not guilty of the gross evils of Pergamum or Thyatira. What is wrong with this church? But see how tenderly He offers His blessings to her, and how He pleads, and entreats her. While talking to each church as a whole, He finally addresses any one Christian in it, as for instance here, in verses 20, 21. These seven messages are certainly applicable to the congregations today; and in them we may see beforehand what our verdict at the Lord's mouth shall be, whether favorable or condemnation.

Holy Spirit? Heb. 3:7-19. What is the promise to the overcomer? What was it that church had to "overcome" especially? Matt. 24:12. How can we overcome? 1 John 5:4.

Verse 8. Smyrna. Was it a question of life and death for the Christians at Smyrna? (v. 10. Cp. Luke 21:16). How then does the Lord describe Himself to them? Is there consolation in that? (Rev. 1:17, 18).

Verse 9. Does Jesus know the sufferings of his people? How were these poor and yet rich? Jas. 2:5. What church was rich, yet poor? Rev. 3:17. Who could truly claim to be Jews? Rom. 2:28, 29.

Verse 10. What command to them? (John 14:1, 27). Did He promise to shield them from suffering? Why then should they not fear? John 16:33. To what extent should they be faithful? What would He do in that case?

THE THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF DECEMBER.

Lesson 12.

December 17, 1916.

THE HOLY CITY.

Golden Text.—"Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples." Rev. 21:3.

Lesson Text.—*Rev. 21:1-14, 22-27; 22:1-5. Memorize 21:3, 4.

1. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: 4 and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away. 5 And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true. 6 And he said unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8 But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death. 22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. 23 And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. 24 And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. 25 And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there): 26 and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations

Verse 1. When did the first heaven and the first earth pass away? Rev. 20:11. Is that before or after the 1,000 years' reign? Read Rev. 20:1-11. What peculiar difference between the old earth and the new is here pointed out?

Verse 2. What city was called "the holy city"? Matt. 27:53. Is this the same, or a new one? Whence did it come? Where, therefore, had it been? Is it there now? Gal. 4:26; Heb. 12:22. Comp. Phil. 3:20. Is it an actual place? John 14:2, 3. (How then is it identified with the Bride herself? Ans. Just as we always identify a city with the inhabitants. This is also scripture usage. Comp. Lam. 2:15; the harlot Babylon, etc.)

Verses 3, 4. What new conditions prevail on the new earth? Count seven items. Where do human beings find true happiness? Ps. 16:11. When and how had tears, death, mourning, crying, and pain come in? Does Sin have any place in this new earth? 2 Pet. 3:13.

Verse 5. What then is God's final purpose? Are these things overdrawn or fictitious? What does he mean by "words" that are "faithful and true?" Verse 6. Are these things already settled and accomplished in God's purpose? Why does God speak of them with such absolute certainty? (Isa. 46:10, 11).

Verse 7. Who only shall inherit these things? Does the word "overcome" imply difficulty, opposition, and conflict? Cp. Jas. 1:12. How do we overcome? 1 John 5:4.

Verse 8. Who are the "fearful" (i. e., "cowardly")? Luke 12:4, 5. Cp. Josh. 1:9; Jer. 1:17. The unbelieving? Heb. 10:38. For the rest, see Gal. 5:19-21; Matt. 25:41.

Verse 22. In what other respect does the New Jerusalem differ from the old? What was the "Temple?" 1 Kings 8:13. Does He then dwell in the whole city here?

Verse 23. What is the illumination of this city? Comp. Isa. 60:19.

into it: 27 and there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life.

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Verse 24. Is the light sufficient for the city only, or does it shine afar? Comp. Isa. 60:1-3. Will there be "nations" and "kings" in the new earth? What tribute will the kings bring into the holy city? (v. 26).

Verses 25-27. Why can the gates be left open? (v. 27) Who alone has right of entrance there? (22:14).

NOTES ON LESSON 12.

The question is often raised whether this is a real city or merely a figurative representation of the final blessedness of the redeemed. Some think that that is a very difficult problem. Why should it be? Even if this were a figurative description, it will nevertheless give us the right impression of the abode of the blessed, (and we shall not go astray if we take it just as it reads) we know, for a certainty, that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us. There is then an actual place awaiting the people of God—not merely a spiritual condition as some try to make it. As for the golden streets, the gates of pearl, the walls of precious stone—if that be figurative it can only mean that whatever we know of that is precious and pure and resplendent on the earth shall make up that "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Pet. 1:4). The Lord reserves it in heaven for us, the while we are "kept by the power of God through faith," here below. (1 Pet. 1:5). When we behold the city it will far surpass any picture our imagination may have conceived. Now unto him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of his glory without blemish in exceeding joy.....be gloryforever more. Amen." (Jude 25).

NOTES ON LESSON 13.

Men have a strong tendency to observe times and seasons, and in answer to this demand they have created such religious days and occasions as Lent, Good Friday, Easter, Christmas. The Lord Jesus Christ has no place for holy days and feasts like these. Barring that on the first day of the week—any and every first day of the week they must partake of the Lord's Supper, there is no distinction of times and seasons in the scheme of the simple New Testament faith and worship. It seems that the Lord even carefully concealed the exact dates of events which might be turned into celebration-days. No one can ever reasonably guess the day of the year on which the Lord Jesus was born. While some think it probable, or at least possible, that He might have been born on December 25, there are others whose opinions demand equal respect, who insist that the one thing certain about the matter is that it could not have been on December 25. So no one knows, and the Lord evidently did not want men to know lest they should make a "holy day" out of it—which very thing they went and did anyhow, in spite of the fact that the date is a mere conjecture. The same is true of the other holy days. Since not even the year of our Lord's birth is absolutely determined, the date of his crucifixion and resurrection (seeing that Easter was a moveable feast) can not be known with certainty. Neither the birth-days nor dying days of any of the apostles or prophets are known, nor of the Virgin Mary. In fact all such dates, as well as most notable localities connected with the life of Christ, or any reference to the personal appearance of Christ or any of the apostles, is studiously avoided in the New Testament; manifestly to prevent the idolatry of pictures, or the conceits of holy places or holy times. We must respect God's reticence in these things. If we celebrate "Christmas" as a secular custom among the people—well; but let us make no religious holy day of it.

THE FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF DECEMBER.

Lesson 13.

December 24, 1916.

UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN.

Golden Text.—“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isa. 9:6.

Lesson Text.*—Isa. 9:2-7; (compare Heb. 2:5-18). Memorize vs. 6, 7.

2. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. 3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased their joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. 4 For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as in the day of Midian. 5 For all the armor of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be for burning, for fuel of fire. 6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this.

Verse 2 When was there a special fulfillment of this? Matt. 4:15, 16. Has it often come true since? Cp. Luke 1:78, 79; John 8:12.

Verse 3 Of what “nation” is he here specially speaking? (Jer. 30:18, 19).

Verse 4 What is the cause of their joy? How did God break the oppressor's staff “in the day of Midian”? (Judges 6 and 7) Comp. Isa. 51:12-16. Has this ever yet come to pass so far as Israel is concerned? Luke 21:24.

Verse 5 What will all armaments and war paraphernalia be good for in that day? Why? Ps. 46:9.

Verse 6 What is the cause of all this future glory? Was there such a child born to Israel? Luke 2:10, 11. Was such a son given them? To them alone? John 3:16, 17. Was He destined to have the government of Israel? Matt. 2:6. Of Israel only? Ps. 22:27, 28; Phil. 2:9-11; Rev. 11:15; 19:16. What three pairs of names go to make up His name? In what sense does He bear the Father's Name? John 14:9; Col. 1:15; 2:9. Who will procure the world-wide Peace referred to in v. 5? Who will break the yoke of bondage in v. 4? What other yoke will He break, and what other peace does He

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give? Matt. 1:21; Luke 4:18; Eph. 2:16, 17; Rom. 5:1.

Verse 7 Will His government ever fail or decline? Will His peace ever be destroyed? Upon whose throne shall He sit? Whose kingdom shall He administer? What was David's throne and kingdom? 2 Sam. 7:8; 1 Chron. 29:3; 28:5. How long shall this rule continue? (Luke 1:32, 33; but not to the exclusion of 1 Cor. 15:24-28. Comp. Rev. 20:4-6 with 20:5—both are true.) What guarantee is given us of the fulfillment of all this? Could God have given the world a more precious and blessed gift than that child? Does that gift not necessarily include ever other? Rom. 8:32.

(See preceding page for Notes on Lesson 13.)

THE FIFTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF DECEMBER.

Lesson 14.

REVIEW.

December 31, 1916:

CHRIST'S COMING AND COMING TO CHRIST.

Golden Text.—"The Spirit and the bride say, Come, And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17.

Reading Lesson. Rev. 22:6-14, 16-21. Memorize verses 12, 14.

6. And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. 7 And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.

8. And I John am he that heard and say these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that showed me these things. 9 And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God.

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. 11 He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still; and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still. 12 Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. 14 Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.

18 I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: 19 and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.

20 He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen.

REVIEW.

Lesson I: A Plot that Failed. Acts 23—What was the Plot?

Lesson II: Paul before Felix. Acts 24—What did Paul preach to Felix?

Lesson III: The Appeal to Caesar. Acts 25—Why that appeal?

Lesson IV: Paul's defense before Agrippa. Acts 26—What were Paul's last words to Agrippa?

Lesson V: The Voyage. Acts 27:1-38—What has the Golden Text (Ps. 37:5) to do with this lesson?

Lesson VI: Shipwrecked on Melita. Acts 27:38; 28:10—In which hospitality brought a blessing.

Lesson VII: (World Temperance)—Rom. 14:13; 15:3—Are the stronger under obligations to the weak?

Lesson VIII: From Melita to Rome. Acts 28:11-31—Can you sum up the Book of Acts now by means of its key and outline? (Acts 1:8).

Lesson IX: A Living Sacrifice. Rom. 12—Repeat Rom. 12:1, 2.

Lesson X: Jesus Christ the First and the Last. Rev. 1—Why is Rev. 1:3 called "A forgotten beatitude"?

Lesson XI: Faithful unto Death. Rev. 2:1-17—Read promise to overcomers.

Lesson XII: The Holy City. Rev. 21:1-9; 22-27—Who may enter, and who is excluded?

Lesson XIII: Unto us a Son is Given. Isa. 9:2-7—Consider John 3:16 and Rom. 8:32.

THE FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JANUARY.

Lesson 1.

January 7, 1917.

THE LIGHT AND LIFE OF MEN.

Golden Text.—"In him was life," and the life was "the light of men." John 1:4.

Lesson Text.*—John 1:1-18. Memorize verses 11, 12.

1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in the darkness and the darkness apprehended it not. 6 There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light. 9 There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name; 13 who were born, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth. 15 John beareth witness of him, and crieth, saying, This was he of whom I said, He that cometh after me is become before me: for he was before me. 16 For of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

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32:9; Matt. 15:24. Did they acknowledge and receive Him? Acts 13:27.

I. Our Lord's Pre-Existence and Deity. Verses 1 to 3.

Verses 1, 2. What other book in the Bible begins with these same three words? (Gen. 1:1) Does this beginning date from Creation, like that in Genesis, or earlier? (For the term "the Word," see Notes.) Was the "Word" God? Yet is there a distinction made between the "word" and God? (Comp. John 17:5).

Verse 3. How many created things were created through Him? How many without Him? Could He then have been a created being Himself? What does "through Him" mean? See 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16.

II. The Light and Life of Men. Verses 4 to 9.

Verse 4. Where was the Treasury and Source of Life? (John 5:26.) In what form did the Life manifest itself to men? Comp. 1 John 1:1-4.

Verse 5. Where did the Light shine? How did the Darkness receive it?

Verses 6, 7. When the Darkness did not recognize the Light, what did God do? What was His object in sending John? Was John's testimony sufficient to convince all? Were they all convinced? Why not?

Verse 8. Was John the Light? What, merely, was he? Do people today ever make the mistake of thinking that the preacher is the Light? What only is his place? (Acts 1:8; 2 Tim. 4:8, etc.)

Verse 9. From what Source did any and all true light that any man ever had, come?

III. Rejection and Reception. Verses 10 to 13.

Verse 10. What or who does the "he" refer to? Comp. v. 3. Where was He? Why did He go there? John 10:35; 16:28. What was He to the world? Heb. 1:10; 1 Cor. 8:6. Did the world show Him recognition? John 15:18; 7:7.

Verse 11. What was His own possession and who His own people? Deut.

Verse 12. But while the Nation rejected Him, were there individuals that received Him? What is it to receive Him? What did He do for those who believed on His name? What is His name? Isa. 6:9; Matt. 1:21; 16:16; Rom. 10:9, 10.

Verse 13. What is said of those who believe on His name? Cp. 1 John 5:1; 1 Pet. 1:23. Of what sort of birth and heredity are they? Gal. 3:26.

IV. . His Fullness Our Supply.. Verses 14-18.

Verse 14. Of what great step in the career of Christ does this verse speak? Comp. Phil. 2:6, 7; Heb. 2:14. When did they behold "his glory?" 2:11. What was His glory in one sense of the word? (Heb. 1:3; John 12:44; 14:9). In another? Luke 9:32, Acts 26:13; Rev. 1:16. Comp. John 17:5, 22, 24. 2 Cor. 3:18.

Verse 15.. What had John said of Him? On what grounds is He preferred before John, Cp. Col. 1:17. How much greater than himself did John really consider Jesus? Mark 1:7.

Verse 16. What was He full of? verse 14. Compare Col. 1:19. What do we all receive out of His fullness?

Verse 17. What did Moses bring? But what did Jesus come for? John 3:17; Luke 19:10; Tit. 2:12.

Verse 18. Did any man ever have direct vision of God? How alone can we know God? Comp. 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 John 5:20, 21.

NOTES ON LESSON 1.

The Word.

This title is given our Lord Jesus Christ because He was always the One through whom the Father expressed Himself. Just as the hidden thought of our hearts is revealed and expressed by means of a word, so the Being and Purpose and Character of the "invisible God" is perfectly expressed in and through the person of the Son. Therefore He is called the Word. As in common life a word stands for and expresses an idea, so the Lord Jesus Christ stands for and manifests the Father. Through Him God, as it were, utters Himself, tells who and what He is.

A WORD.

Represents something,
Expresses something
Manifests something,
Reveals something,
Makes known something,
Makes available something,

Communicates something.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Represents God. John 12:44.
Expresses God. John 1:18.
Manifests God. Heb. 1:3.
Reveals God. 2 Cor. 4:6.
Makes known God. 1 John 5:20, 21.
Makes God available, i. e., accessible.
John 14:6. Eph. 2:18.
Communicates God (i. e., brings God to us and us to God). 1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 5:19; Matt. 1:23.

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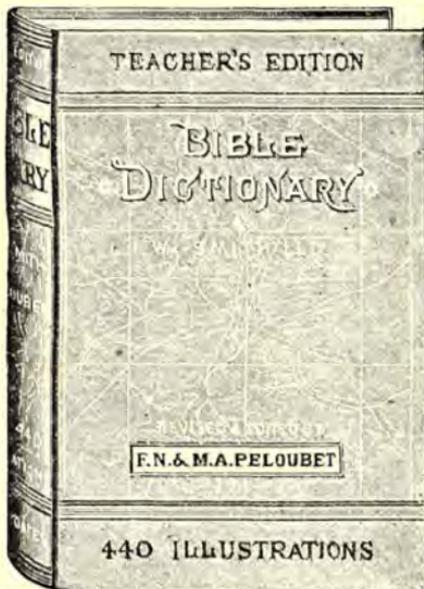
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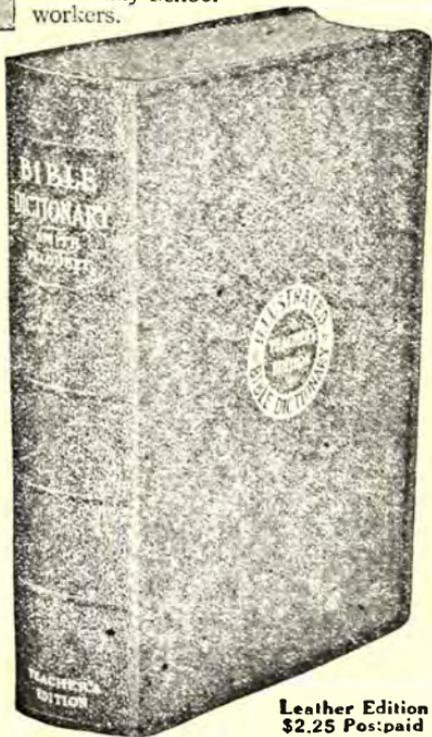
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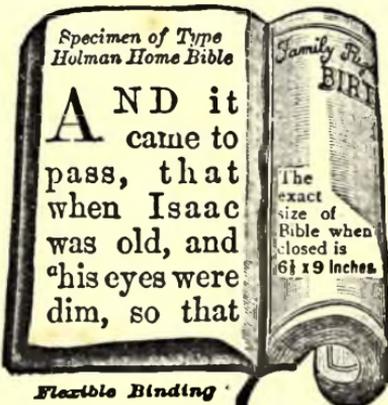
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