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THIS JOURNAL AND ITS MISSION.

THIS journal is set for the defence of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated,--Redemption through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all." (1 Pet. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:6.) Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to--"Make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which...has been hid in God,...to the intent that now might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God"--"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed."--Eph. 3:5-9,10.

It stands free from all parties, sects and creeds of men, while it seeks more and more to bring its every utterance into fullest subjection to the will of God in Christ, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures. It is thus free to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken;--according to the divine wisdom granted unto us, to understand. Its attitude is not dogmatical, but confident; for we know whereof we affirm, treading with implicit faith upon the sure promises of God. It is held as a trust, to be used only in his service; hence our decisions relative to what may and what may not appear in its columns must be according to our judgment of his good pleasure, the teaching of his Word, for the upbuilding of his people in grace and knowledge. And we not only invite but urge our readers to prove all its utterances by the infallible Word to which reference is constantly made, to facilitate such testing.

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"--peculiarly "His workmanship;" that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age--ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.--1 Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping and polishing, of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones," "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.--Rev. 15:5-8.

That the Basis of Hope, for the Church and the World, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."--Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5,6.

That the Hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.--1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests of the next age.--Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope for the World lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom--the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified Church.--Acts 3:19-21; Isa. 35.

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THANKS FOR PROMPTNESS.

IN compliance with our request in last issue we are hearing from large numbers of TOWER readers. Thanks! We now ask consideration of the fact that our mails are very large, as an explanation for delays in answering, and for the brevity of our replies.

We greatly appreciate and enjoy your letters, being always specially pleased with those which acquaint us with your spiritual welfare. Please accept the WATCH TOWER articles as our responses; for, indeed, many of the subjects treated are suggested by your questions and evident needs.

A MUSICAL NUMBER.

WE hope soon to issue a musical number of the TOWER. It will contain some strictly new pieces of vocal music, written specially for it, on the lines of our spiritual hopes and joys. You may expect it February 1.

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VIEWS FROM THE TOWER.

PRAISE from thankful hearts, to the great Giver of all good, should be the uppermost sentiment with all the children of the great King at the dawn of the New Year 1896. Our praise should be for mercies past, and no less for the exceeding great and precious promises which stretch out before all who in deed and in truth are under the protection of the precious blood and consecrated fully to the will of God.

"Give me a thankful heart,
Like, Lord, to thine!"

As a miser counts over repeatedly the gold he loves, and thus comes to value it more highly, so the children of God should count and recount the Lord's favors, and study their benefits, that they may appreciate them the more. The fully consecrated will, in the light of God's Word, find cause for thankfulness in the very things which once they would have reckoned as adversities; for they have learned that all things work together for good to them that love God [supremely], to those called according to his purpose. He who has freely given us Christ, shall he not with and through him freely give us all things? (Rom. 8:32.) Therefore, those who have rightly accepted God's "unspeakable gift" find in him abundant cause for thankfulness and rejoicing. Having in him the promise, not only of the life that is to come, but also of the present life (1 Tim. 4:8), they sing:--

"Christ for sickness, Christ for health:
Christ for poverty or wealth:
Christ for joy, and Christ for sorrow;

Christ to-day and Christ to-morrow:
Christ my Savior, Christ my Friend:
Christ my Treasure without end."

After considering our personal blessings and privileges and rendering praise therefor, let us, as members of his Church, render thanks for divine favor upon his people and his work, and upon our united, though feeble, efforts in connection with it shown in the annual report in our last issue: also for the privilege of being co-workers together with God in the great plan of the ages;--for the privilege of sharing now the reproaches of them that reproached him, and thus filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ (Col. 1:24); and for the glorious prospect that those who suffer with him for righteousness' sake shall reign with him, if faithful unto the end. Let us be thankful, too, that as the darkness settles down upon the world, "ye brethren are not in darkness;" and that, being enlightened, the very things which cause the hearts of the world to fail with fear, and for looking forward to those things coming upon the earth, are to us evidences that our deliverance draweth nigh; causing us to lift up our heads with hope, and our hearts with rejoicing.

The year, as it opens upon the Nominal Church, finds it flourishing as to numbers, influence and outward prosperity. "Rich, increased in goods, and having need of nothing," is its sentiment, as foretold by our Lord. (Rev. 3:14-19.) Never was there so much wealth invested in church buildings, equipments, choirs and minister's salaries. Never were the numbers of members so great, and never did they represent so much wealth. In addition, there is a general tendency toward union, federation, "confederacy," which is popularly considered an evidence of growth in grace. Never were there so many "young people" active in Christian work; and never so many "Boy's Brigades" learning the use of carnal weapons.

But inwardly what do we see?--We see (1) a few in every congregation who are perplexed,--who know not whether to think that the outward prosperity is genuine or artificial, who know not whether to condemn the majority

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for having lost the spirit and power of full consecration, or whether they should accept the verdict of the majority that they are "old foggy," and the old sermons, old hymns, and old reverence for God and his Word and consecration of heart and life merely old-time nonsense. They hunger and thirst after righteousness sometimes, and try to satisfy their longings by listening to sermons which know nothing of either the cross or the crown, being prepared for the unregenerate "tares" who have no appreciation of those things.

Amongst her learned men in seminaries and pulpits the doctrine of Evolution has supplanted the Bible doctrine of the fall, the ransom and coming restitution. And her great men, with very few exceptions, vie with each other in destroying the faith which once they preached,--

in discrediting the inspiration and truthfulness of the Bible, under the name of "higher criticism." This flood of infidelity has not yet reached the masses: when it does Psalm 91:7 will have its fulfilment;--thousands will fall from the faith now held by them credulously, but not understood, into mere social moralism, denying the fall and consequently the redemption from its condemnation, and all necessity for an imputed righteousness of Christ. This is the position of the leaders now, and both reason and Scripture indicate that "many will follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." The few years ahead are important ones, and demand the energy of all who are awake to the truth, to extend the helping hand before the falling away becomes general.

The outlook amongst the nations is unrest--"fear of those things coming upon the earth." Never were they so well prepared for strife, yet never did they so much dread it, and with good cause.

The Far Eastern question, in which all the great nations of the world are interested, as well as China, Japan and Russia, is still unsettled; it is merely eclipsed for the time by the Turkish or Eastern-European question. Turkey has long been known as "the sick man" amongst the nations; and the Great Powers of Europe, all anxious to get hold of his possessions, fear each other. Constantinople has one of the choicest harbors of the world, and, in the hands of progressive people, would be of inestimable importance. It is coveted by Russia, which is practically an inland country, her Baltic and Arctic sea ports being ice-locked for a considerable portion of the year.

The nations of Europe fear any increase of Russian power or influence, as likely to overshadow their own; and hence have aided Turkey to resist her powerful and acquisitive neighbor, Russia. It was for this reason that the Crimean war was fought, and, for Russia's limitation, one of the terms of that peace stipulates that no foreign warships may pass through the Dardanelles without permission from the Turkish government, Russia's ships being the only foreign

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warships that would probably desire to pass. Hence Turkey is called "the buffer kingdom." The "sick-man's" government, always execrable, has since become still worse, and Russian intrigue has fostered rebellions. But these seceding provinces were not allowed to fall into Russia's hands, nor into Austria's. The great powers met and decided to organize a line of petty principedoms between Turkey on the one side and Austria and Russia on the other. These are Roumania, Bulgaria, Servia and Montenegro.

The recent massacres of tens of thousands of Armenian Christians (Catholics, slightly different from the Roman and Greek Catholics) in the Sultan's dominions is probably due either to the breaking down of the thoroughly corrupt government, or else to conspirators in power, who hope to secure the overthrow of the present government by

"the powers," and thus to gain some personal advantages. The Sultan, once very tractable to the wishes of Great Britain, believing her a friend, is now distrustful, and fears that, as she has taken and held Egypt, she may intend now to grasp Syria and Palestine.

The English people clamor for interference for the protection of life and order, and do not in general realize the importance of Turkey as a "buffer;" and their rulers fear to mention it lest it should stir up Russian pride and precipitate an undesirable conflict. Russia stands waiting, as for a rich morsel, but preferring to get it at a cheaper price than war. The situation is greatly strained every way. If it results in war, the Turks will make a stern resistance, and after their fall, Russia, with her army already on the spot, will be unwilling to let go, especially as she now has the French navy for an ally on the sea. This would be likely to involve all Europe, and perhaps Japan, in a war such as was not since there was a nation.

But while the outlook is threatening, and many consider it sure that such a general European war will break out during this year, we do not share their fear. Turkey may be still further dismembered, or even entirely cut up, but the general European war will certainly not come for several years yet; not for ten years, we feel quite confident. If it be asked upon what evidence we reckon, we answer, (1) Upon the divine prediction of Rev. 7:1-3, that the "Four angels" (agents) must hold back that great storm until the truth shall first prepare or "seal the servants of God in their foreheads [intellectually]." (2) Upon the fact that the Scriptures clearly teach that first the union or federation of Protestants shall take place, and enable them to act conjointly with Papacy in support of "the kings of the earth and their armies," before the great overthrow of all government will take place. Whenever the general European war occurs, we may feel tolerably sure that its outcome will be world-wide anarchy, accompanied eventually by all the horrors of the French Revolution--worse by far than those perpetrated recently in Turkey. Of that time the prophet declares every man's hand shall be against his neighbor; and our Lord says that unless those days should be shortened (by the setting up of the elect in the kingdom) there would be no flesh saved.--Zech. 8:10; Matt. 24:22.

We have gone into this matter at some length, because "Adventists" are industriously teaching that when Turkey falls the Lord's second advent and the burning up

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of the world will immediately follow. This has long been their mistaken theory, often disappointed. They fail to see that our Lord is a spirit being, whose second advent, glory and power, will be spiritual, not fleshly; that his Millennial parousia--presence--will be invisible to men; and that his kingdom will be the invisible power that shall use the nations to overthrow one another, and thus prepare men for the reign of the Prince of Peace.--See MILLENNIAL

DAWN, VOL. II., page 103.

Much more dangerous looking, to our view, is the threatened rupture between Great Britain and the United States. Related by ties of blood and history and language and religious sentiment, a war between these countries would be a specially sad picture. Yet the consanguinity of the two nations in some respects increases the danger; for both are courageous, both boastful and proud, both full of resources, and both confident of ability to teach the other "a needed lesson;" and neither is willing to give an inch, nor to acknowledge an error. Yes, we must admit, there is great danger of a war, which would be a disgrace to the two nations which, more than any others, should be able to settle disputes justly and amicably. Nevertheless, we do not expect war. We have great confidence that the British government will find a way to arbitrate its dispute with little Venezuela. Such a course would be very much to their credit every way. Yet thoughtless public opinion, with "brag and bluster," may force Lord Salisbury to say and do things very contrary to his own judgment. It is safe to assume that the United States Government dare not, and will not, retreat from the essentials of its present position.

* * *

Matters get wonderfully mixed up sometimes. For instance, it was the peaceable, order-loving Christian people who insisted that British diplomats and, if necessary, gunboats should exact of China reparation for the murder of Christian missionaries, and who secured the execution of seventeen Chinese rioters. It is the same class of peace-loving people who are now urging Lord Salisbury to begin a war at once upon Turkey--in defense of the poor Armenians. Even the most ardent peace advocates must admit that, in Turkey's case, everything possible seems to have been done to avoid war; and that it is merely a question of time until the Turks will utterly exterminate the Armenians, if "the powers that be" do not interfere with physical force. The perplexing questions are: would it be more righteous and honorable to go to war or to permit such atrocities?

What should be the attitude of God's fully consecrated saints upon this subject? Should we favor war and bloodshed in a good cause, or a peace that would leave fellow creatures exposed to such atrocities? What would our Lord do or say on this question?

We believe that he would repeat his former words,-- "They that take to the sword shall perish by the sword." "Do good to them that hate you and persecute you." "If ye suffer for well doing, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth on you." "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight." These instructions, however, are not for the world individually or nationally, but for the saints who would walk in their Lord's footsteps. Of these our Lord said, "Ye are not of this world; for I have chosen you out of the world and ordained

you, that you should go and bring forth fruit."

The governments of the earth, although largely dominated by Satan, "the prince of this world," and although in no sense kingdoms of God, nevertheless have a lease of power from the Almighty, which carries with it a certain responsibility;* they are to be "ministers of justice" fully authorized to "bear the sword" and use it, as the Apostle Paul points out. (Rom. 13:1-4.) So, then, let the nations do their part, and let God's consecrated "little flock" remember their Master's words, "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world," and abstain from the use of carnal weapons, and from counseling others to use them, and instead be "fervent in spirit serving the Lord," and using the sword of the spirit, the Word of God. The "saints" thus appear to the world unpatriotic; but this is unavoidable. We have become aliens so far as all present earthly governments are concerned; we are citizens of the heavenly kingdom, and hence "strangers and pilgrims" here. Filled with the spirit of the Captain of our salvation, we cannot be otherwise than opposed to the destruction of human lives, our desire on the contrary being to save them. If compelled by the government to enter the army, we should "go" (Matt. 5:41), but probably could get into the hospital service.

The fact not generally recognized is, that the Scriptures lay down a particular rule for the saints--the law of Love to God and man--while the world is left to its own expediency. The Church alone is on trial: the world is merely gaining an experience, whose failures will prepare the worthy to appreciate the Millennial reign of righteousness, under the law of Love.

*See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., p. 259; VOL. II., p.73.

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THE EARTH SAW AND TREMBLED.

"His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled."
"Beware lest you should reject him who now speaks; for if those did not escape who rejected him who admonished them on earth [Moses--Heb. 10:28], much less shall we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven; whose voice then shook the earth [Exod. 19:16-18]; but now it has been announced, saying, 'Yet once for all I will shake not only the earth, but the heaven also.' Now this word, 'Yet once for all' denotes the removal of the things shaken, as of things made, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."--Psa. 97:4; Heb. 12:25-27.

THE Psalmist prophetically taking a standpoint of observation future from his day declared, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." As has been shown,* this began to be true in 1878, when our returned Lord Jesus took unto himself his great power. Yet not until 1915, when his kingdom will be fully set up and established in the earth, will his glorious reign be fully manifested and recognized. But that the prophet is referring specially to the present time, since 1878 and down to 1915, is clear from his succeeding statement--"Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies."

*See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. III., Chap. ix.

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How true it is that the storm clouds are all about this day of his kingly presence! and the darkness of gloom and perplexity and trouble deepens on every side. If we inquire, Why is this day of his presence such a time of trouble and perplexity and distress of nations? the answer is, Because righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne, and he is judging the nations and weighing them in the balance. Judgment is being laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet, to the intent that ere long the equitable principles of his government may be established in all the earth. And not only will all unrighteousness be made manifest, but "a fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies." All the opposers of his righteous course will be the sufferers: they shall be cut off, destroyed, burned up, with the fire of his jealousy.-- Zeph. 3:8.

This work of judgment and consequent time of trouble being a necessary preparation for the glorious reign of righteousness that shall immediately succeed it, and all being wisely directed by the high and holy One who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, the Prophet bids us discern in it all the abundant cause for rejoicing and gladness. Indeed, there is cause for rejoicing, not only among the saints, but in the whole earth; and it is the privilege of the saints to tell them so if they will hear. But whether they will hear or whether they forbear, let us tell it out, and by and by when the great afflictions of this judgment hour begin to seal its instruction upon the hearts of men, then the blessed testimony will be as healing balm, and they will see that he that smote them in his wrath, and scourged them in his hot displeasure, is also merciful and gracious, and unwilling that they should perish, but anxious rather that they should turn unto him and live.

It is in the midst of the clouds and darkness of this day of trouble incident to the setting up of Messiah's Kingdom, that the statement of the prophet is verified--"His

lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled." How apt is the figure! Truly like lightning flashes in the midst of the gloom and perplexity of this cloudy day come to men the remarkable glimpses of the great principles of truth and righteousness in contrast with which the world's present disorder is so manifest. A flash of lightning from the obscured throne discloses here one error and there another and another; and by and by the whole world will be aroused. Already it is largely so, and the whole world trembles for fear, not knowing what the outcome will be.

It is remarkable, too, that the lightning flashes are continually calling attention to the Word of God--to the golden rule, to the equal rights and privileges of human brotherhood, to the faultless character and self-sacrificing disposition of Jesus Christ, to the law of love in contrast with the law of selfishness. It is leading men to reason of righteousness (if not to practice it) and of coming judgments when they hope and believe that in some way present wrongs will be righted. By the sudden and now increasingly frequent flashes of light which issue from the very storm clouds that surround the invisible, spiritual presence of our glorious King, these principles of the Word of God are ever and anon being illuminated and brought to the front for the consideration of all men. They are discussed in the daily press, in our popular periodicals, in labor and trades unions, on the streets, in stores and factories and counting rooms, in the market places, at public gatherings; even the heathen nations are discussing them and contrasting the daily life of professed Christians and Christian nations with the character and teachings of the great founder of Christianity, extolling the latter and ridiculing the former.

Thus his lightnings are enlightening the world, and as a result there is great commotion everywhere manifest: there is dissatisfaction, unrest, and the whole current of popular thought is set in a revolutionary direction. The lightning flashes are revealing the corruption that is in the world, and showing men that they are living far below the dignity of manhood; but how to right things they are not able to see; and the conflicting ideas and voices and theories and threats reveal the facts the prophets foretold--"The nations are angry"; and the whole earth trembles from the din of a wordy conflict which they realize must sooner or later come to blows. "The earth saw, and trembled."

But while the whole earth trembles for fear and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth, what is the attitude and condition of the Lord's consecrated and faithful people? Are they, too, in fear? and when the judgments of the Lord fall heavily upon the wayward and disobedient, so that the whole earth reels to and fro and staggers like a drunken man (Isa. 24:20), are they in dismay and distress? Ah, no; for it is written--"Zion heard and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced, because of thy judgments, O Lord;" and Psalms 91 and 46 show why they rejoice while others weep. It is because

they dwell in the secret place of the Most High (represented by the holy place in the typical tabernacle), and abide under the shadow of the Almighty (as the typical tabernacle was covered by the cloud, which symbolized the Lord's presence and protection). "The secret counsel of the Lord is for them that fear him, and his covenant [is] to make it known to them."--Psa. 25:14.

These dwellers in the secret place of the Most High are therefore provided in these perilous times with a clear knowledge of the divine plan, which enables them to see both the necessity for the present method of divine discipline upon the world and also the peaceable fruits of righteousness which shall result therefrom. In the midst of the storm and battle of this day of the Lord they hear the commanding voice of the Lord of armies, and their hearts rejoice because they have full confidence in his ability to bring order out of all the confusion. They realize that in the judgments of this day it is the Lord that speaketh from

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heaven--from the high place of authority and control; and therefore they rejoice and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness--of his justice, wisdom and love, which insure his doing all things well.

But the Psalmist intimates that while the world at large would be in ignorance of the import of present events, and therefore in fear and dread; and while the saints, with clear knowledge, will be rejoicing because of the Lord's judgments and their foreseen outcome; some, all heedless of both the world's distress and of the voice which speaketh from heaven, will still boast themselves of idols. He says, "Confounded be all they that serve graven images; that boast themselves of idols."--Psa. 97:7.

These words call to mind the warning of the Apostle Paul, above quoted--"See that ye refuse not him that [now] speaketh," etc. The Apostle addresses these words to those who know the Lord's voice and recognize it, warning them against at any time refusing longer to heed it, when it speaks in wrath and judgment. But, alas! there are some who heed not the warning, and who, although they recognize the voice of the Lord, do refuse longer to obey it and be led by it; and they turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, to the idols which their wayward hearts have set up in his stead. These "graven images" are indeed the work of their own hands--they are the human philosophies and science, falsely so called, of this evil day; and those who reject the testimony of him that speaketh from heaven, having once heard it, invariably fall into some one of the many forms of idolatrous worship now so prevalent; or else they drift restlessly from one to another of them.

All such shall surely be confounded; they shall be put to shame and confusion; their idols shall be destroyed; and the wilful sinner, once enlightened and blessed with the hallowed influences of the holy spirit and the truth, and

who then turns away from all these, the Apostle declares shall not escape the reward of his deeds. "For," he says, "if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from [after once recognizing] him that speaketh from heaven."

The former reference, as shown by the preceding verses (Heb. 12:18-21), was to the ceremonies which accompanied the establishment of the law covenant, with Israel, in the hands of Moses, the mediator of that covenant. (Exod. 19.)

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So solemn and impressive was the occasion that even "Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." First, through Moses, the people entered into a sacred covenant to obey the Lord, saying, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." And the Lord covenanted with them, saying, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people;...And ye shall be a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation."--Exod. 19:5-8.

Then followed the giving of the law and the accompanying solemnities which established the covenant in the hands of Moses as the divinely appointed mediator--"And the Lord said unto Moses. Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee and believe thee forever." (Verse 9.) Then followed the demonstrations of the divine presence in the cloud-covered mountain, from which proceeded thunders and lightnings and the sound of a trumpet--"And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice....And the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount, and Moses went up." (Verses 18-20.) And the people were charged not even to touch the mount on penalty of instant death.--Verses 12,13,21-25.

These solemn ceremonies prefigured the still more impressive circumstances which accompany the establishment of the "new covenant" in the hands of the mediator greater than Moses--our Lord Jesus Christ. The mountain (kingdom) of the Lord's house is now being established above the tops of all the mountains (kingdoms) of the earth, and exalted above the hills. (Isa. 2:2.) Clouds and darkness (trouble and perplexity and distress of nations) are round about it (Psa. 97:2); and the thunderings and lightnings are making all the earth to tremble as did Israel at Sinai. And now (since 1878) "God hath set his King upon his holy hill of Zion." (Psa. 2:6.) Wherefore, says the Apostle, "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." For if those who refused to obey Moses, and presumptuously disgraced the ceremonies of the occasion at Sinai, met with instant death, how can we escape if we disregard the voice of the Mediator greater than Moses,

who now bids all beware of the presumptuous sin of disregarding the remarkable circumstances which now accompany the establishment of the new covenant through Christ, its mediator?

We see the gathering, darkening clouds of trouble; we hear the thunder tones of judgment that "call the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof"--from the east to the west (Psa. 50:1); we see the lightning flashes of truth and righteousness, and how the whole earth trembles with fear and for looking after those things that are coming; and the foretold events of this harvest time speak in trumpet tones. How shall we regard these things? Shall it be with thoughtful and reverent fear, lest, the promise being left us of entering into the rest and glory of his Kingdom, any of us should seem to come short of it (Heb. 4:1), and with great carefulness to make our calling and election sure? or shall it be with that presumptuous irreverence which disregards all these manifestations of divine power and glory, and, turning away from him that thus speaketh from heaven, sets up some idol of a wayward heart? Let us beware of any condition of heart that would lead to such a course.

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As in the type, so here, the establishment of the new covenant is accompanied with the shaking of the earth (society) and the mountains (kingdoms); and not only so, but Paul says the heavens also (the ecclesiastical powers) shall be shaken.

What is the object of all this shaking? It is the removal of the things shaken, and the establishment of a kingdom which cannot be moved. In this eventful period everything that can be shaken will be shaken; for only the unshakable principles of truth and righteousness can endure and be worthy of a place in the Kingdom of God. And every one called to share in that Kingdom must be a lover of and follower after righteousness and truth. All others will be shaken out of the company called to share the honors of the Kingdom. The many snares and delusions of this evil day are accomplishing this very work: they are shaking out all the unstable as well as the false and faithless ones; and in the end only the true will remain.

Seeing then that all these present things shall so shortly be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? "Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace."--2 Pet. 3:11,14.

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STILL LET OUR HALLOWED ALTARS BURN.

THE following lines were prepared by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes (now deceased) and read at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the organization of the Young Men's Christian Association, in Boston. They voice well our sentiments for the New Year 1896 for all of God's children awakening from the errors of the "dark ages." As errors are discovered and discarded, may the truths, old as well as new, become all the more precious to us all.

"Our Father, while our hearts unlearn
The creeds that wrong thy name,
Still let our hallowed altars burn
With faith's undying flame.

"Not by the lightning gleams of wrath
Our souls thy face shall see,
The star of love must light the path
That leads to heaven and thee.

"Help us to read our Master's will
Through every darkening stain
That clouds his sacred image still,
And see him once again,--

"The brother man, the pitying friend,
Who weeps for human woes,
Whose pleading words for pardon blend
With cries of raging foes.

"If 'mid the gathering storms of doubt
Our hearts grow faint and cold,
The strength we cannot live without
Thy love will not withhold.

"Our prayers accept; our sins forgive;
Our youthful zeal renew;
Shape for us holier lives to live,
And nobler work to do."

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THE ONE THING DESIRABLE.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?...One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple."--Psa. 27:1,4.

THE inspired Psalmist in loftiest strains of devotion and fervor puts into the hearts and minds of God's

consecrated people sentiments of faith and trust and love and adoration to God, who is worthy of all praise. While many of these sentiments were based upon his own checkered experience, they were uttered under divine inspiration for the instruction and edification specially of the true spiritual Israel of God.

Thus the Lord himself would indicate to us the sentiments of fervent devotion to him that should fill our hearts; and in this view of the matter we see how closely he would draw us to himself in love and faith and childlike confidence. While reason and common sense have their rightful place and are indispensable to a religious life, the soul that never mounts upon the wings of holy and fervent emotion, that is never stirred to its depths by a sense of the divine goodness and beneficence, has never yet experienced the blessedness of the relation of sonship. A true son of a beloved and approving father naturally experiences the fervor of tender emotion. Especially is this so of a true son of God who recognizes in his heavenly Father the perfection of every grace, the crowning glory of all excellence, and who lives in close communion and fellowship with him and has the constant witness in himself of his love and approval.

Ah, those were no empty words of our blessed Lord Jesus when he said,--"The Father himself loveth you." "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 16:27; 14:23.) It is under such conditions that all those holy emotions of love, tenderness, faith, gratitude and praise fill to the brim our cup of joy; and with holy ecstasy we sing, "My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

How full of the melody of fervent emotion, of grateful

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praise, and of loving confidence are the inspired psalms! They bid our hearts rejoice and our tongues be glad, and they

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show us how, by meditating on his word and obeying his precepts, to "Rejoice in the Lord always, and in everything give thanks."

It was in view of the Lord's providences and of his many deliverances from the power of his enemies, and of the uniform kindness and mercy of God as he meditated upon them, that David exclaimed, "The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?" This consolation, variously expressed throughout the Scriptures, comes with all its blessed potency in our times of greatest need: the more desperate and determined the foes we encounter and the more fierce the conflict with the powers of darkness, the more glorious is the deliverance and the

clearer are the manifestations of divine grace. And, as a consequence, faith takes deeper root, and, with renewed confidence and assurance, lays hold upon all the precious promises of God; and love and gratitude well up from hearts refreshed with an increased sense of the divine favor and blessing.

So it was with David; and so it is with God's faithful people who lead a life of prayer and faith and close fellowship with God. Such fellowship with God in adversity and in prosperity naturally tends more and more to center the heart's affections and desires in God, until the one thing supremely desired and sought after is that expressed by the Psalmist--to continually dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

To dwell continually in the house of the Lord signifies to be continually counted worthy and to be recognized of God as a member of his Church, "whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. 3:6.) These, who hold fast their faith, and by faith overcome the allurements and temptations of the world, dying daily unto its spirit, hopes and ambitions, and living more and more unto God--these shall indeed dwell in the house of the Lord, in his holy, spiritual temple, his Church, forever. Now they dwell in the holy place of consecration and adoption; and the Lord says, "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels;" and by and by he will present them to himself "a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, and worthy, as kings and priests unto God, to pass beyond the veil into the Most Holy--into the glorious spiritual condition and into the immediate presence of God.

"To behold the beauty of the Lord" is to behold the beauty of holiness, to have this image of his glory ever before the mind's eye as our inspiration, our light, our guide, our pattern and our chief joy. Here indeed is the Christian's secret of a happy life--happy in the midst of whatever may come to him of affliction or pain or loss or perplexity or whatever experiences come through the checkered scenes of this present life. To behold the beauty of the Lord really is only possible to those who dwell in his house; for only to such does he reveal himself "the fairest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely." Such only know how to appreciate the beauty of his holiness; such only can delight themselves in the Lord and in the continual meditation of his law, and in conforming their lives to it.

"To inquire in his temple" signifies that those who are truly of the Lord's house are inquirers, students of his holy law and testimony, and that their delight is in so doing. The language of their hearts is, "Oh, how love I thy law; it is my meditation all the day." "I have meat to eat that ye [who are of the world] know not of;" for "It is my delight to do thy will, O God."

This one desire is the sum and substance of the Christian's

ambition as more and more he becomes dead to the world and alive toward God. Let us more and more seek after it and conform to it; for in so doing Christian courage, boldness, fortitude and zeal will be greatly multiplied. These all are not only born of faith, but they increase and grow strong by a living faith developed and strengthened by the lessons of experience.

Courage, born of faith and strengthened by endurance, cries with humble boldness in the midst of the deepest darkness of the most perplexing difficulties, and in the midst of the wildest storms and most threatening dangers, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

The Apostle Paul surely caught this blessed inspiration when he said, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice....Be careful for nothing; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Mark how all through the Word of God we are taught, not only to be sober, vigilant, diligent, thoughtful, prayerful, and always abounding in the work of the Lord through whatsoever it may bring of toil or care or reproach or persecution, but in the midst of any or all of these experiences we are taught to be happy and to be filled with the inspiration of a holy joy. And not only are we counselled to be joyous, but the manner of life which naturally produces this joy is pointed out to us. When we come into the Lord's family we enter a new and holy atmosphere which those only can realize and appreciate who have the one desire above referred to paramount to every other, viz.,--to be counted worthy to abide continually in the house of the Lord.

"Do not count, when day is o'er, daily loss from life's rich store;
But the gains, however small, count them daily one and all:
Every sweet and gracious word, every pleasant truth you've heard;
Every tender glance and tone, every kindly deed you've known:
Let all evil things go by; still with brave endeavor, try simple joys
to multiply.
Thus you'll learn, how large a sum will with faithful reckoning come."

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THE FORERUNNER OF CHRIST.

--JAN. 5.--Luke 1:5-17.--

Golden Text--"And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways."--Luke 1:76.

IN considering this familiar narrative we are reminded of the Lord's great care in preparing his chosen instruments

for the various parts of his great work. Abraham's life was a long discipline of faith and patience; for he was to be the father of the faithful, a type of the fatherhood of God, and a worthy example to all his children, both those under the Law and those under the new covenant of grace.--Rom. 4:11-17.

Moses was specially prepared to be a leader, lawgiver and judge to Israel. Born under the humiliating conditions of bondage and the imperial sentence of death, he was providentially protected, preserved and adopted into the royal family, where he received a measure of that education necessary for his future service; and after that he had forty years more in the retirement of domestic life, which, under the operations of divine grace, hardened his virtues and mellowed the ardor of his temperament. Thus God gave to Israel a trained and experienced character as a leader. Similarly, suitable preparation for the positions they were to occupy or the work they were to do is very noticeable in other cases, both of Bible record and of subsequent history. Mark the case of Samuel, a child of prayer, devoted to the Lord from his infancy, and trained in the service of the Lord under the care of Eli; and of Paul, called from his infancy, instructed in the law, and zealous toward God even while ignorantly persecuting the saints, verily thinking he did God service.

John the Baptist was another illustration. The preparations in this, as in most of these cases, began before he was born, in the hearts of his parents,--"They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." (Verse 6) Consider also subsequent reformers known to all through the pages of history, and mark the providential leadings in their preparation for their work long before they could have any knowledge of the work that was before them. Consider also how the Lord has been preparing the Gospel Church for its Millennial work; and how he prepared the ancient worthies for their Millennial work in the earthly phase of the coming Kingdom; and so on through all the list of his "chosen vessels." The "chosen vessel" is always a prepared vessel for the service intended; and that the preparation is of God, and not of himself, is manifest from the fact that in every case it began long before the chosen one knew of the ends to be accomplished or the significance of the providential circumstances or the measures of discipline.

The principal preparation which God requires for every part of his honorable service is holiness of heart--devotedness to God and to his righteousness and truth, and abhorrence of all that is unholy, unclean. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." There are, however, some parts of the Lord's service which reflect no honor upon those engaged in it, though they do reflect honor upon the wisdom and power of God who is able to make even the wrath of his enemies to praise him, by his power to out-general and overrule their evil for good to his cause. For instance, Satan, and every other evil worker, whose evil devices are, by divine power, overruled for good of God,

unwittingly serve some of the purposes of God--sometimes

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for the discipline of the children of God and sometimes for the revolutionizing of affairs in the world.

The prenatal influences upon John the Baptist were such that, from his birth, his heart was inclined toward God and holiness (verse 15); and the training and discipline of his life were such that at maturity he was ready for the work of introducing to Israel the long-promised Messiah. Of him it was foretold, "He shall be great in the sight of the Lord." Yes, he was a great man, a great preacher and a great prophet. Jesus said he was the greatest of all the prophets. (Matt. 11:11.) But he was not great in the eyes of men. He was never a guest at the palace of Herod, but he was a prisoner in his prisons. He was not an esteemed orator in the Jewish synagogues, but he was "a voice crying in the wilderness." He was not arrayed in purple and fine linen, nor did he fare sumptuously every day, but his raiment was of camel's hair and a leathern girdle, and his meat was locusts and wild honey. And though, for a time, the multitudes were attracted by his preaching, he was soon abandoned by the people, imprisoned by the king, and finally beheaded in prison.

And yet John was truly a great man; for he was "great in the sight of the Lord." He was great in the sense that he that ruleth his own spirit according to the principles and precepts of the divine Word is greater than he that taketh a city. (Prov. 16:32.) All the natural aspirations and human ambitions were made subservient to his one mission of introducing his cousin, Jesus of Nazareth, a man of humble birth and circumstances, as the Messiah, to whom he knew the gathering of the people would be after he had accomplished his mission of introducing him. (Gen. 49:10.) But John was pleased to have it so, and declared that in performing this service for his cousin according to the flesh, and thus accomplishing his part in the divine purpose and prophecy, his joy was fulfilled. (John 3:29.) And, by the eye of faith discerning in the humble Nazarene the Son of God, he said to the people, "One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose." "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" "He must increase, but I must decrease."-- Luke 3:16; John 1:29; 3:30.

It was this meekness, this complete self-abnegation and singleness of purpose to accomplish the righteous will of God, that constituted the moral greatness of John. And because he was in that attitude of heart where the Lord could use him he was privileged to be the greatest, the most highly honored, of all the prophets, in that he was chosen to introduce, to Israel and the world, the Anointed Son of God, the Redeemer and future King of the whole earth. Thus he became a great man, a great preacher of righteousness and truth, the greatest of all the prophets, and one of the heirs of the earthly phase of the Kingdom

of God.

What a profitable lesson is in this for all who would seek true greatness--to be "great in the sight of the Lord." It calls to mind that wise admonition of the Apostle, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Pet. 5:6.) The way of the cross, the way of humiliation and self-abasement, is the way to the crown, to that true honor that cometh from God only. Where now is the honor of the great ones of earth who have passed away--the Caesars, the Herods, the Alexanders and Napoleons; the Jewish scribes and Pharisees

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and doctors of the law and Rabbis? and where all the reverend Popes and Cardinals and Bishops and Priests of the great Apostasy who proudly flourished in their day? They have all come to naught, and in the Millennial judgment they will come forth to shame and confusion of face, stripped of all their honors. But those truly great ones--"great in the sight of the Lord"--are reserved unto honor and glory and power at the appearing and Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Let the lesson come home to each of our hearts,-- "He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve." Patiently submit to the humbling now, and hopefully and joyfully wait for the glory to be revealed by and by in all the faithful. This is not the time nor place for rewards, but for discipline and service, for the development of character, for making ready for the future exaltation, that we may appear without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, joint heirs of our Redeemer.

For an exposition of verses 16 and 17 see MILLENNIAL DAWN VOL. II., chapter viii.

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THE BOY JESUS.

--JAN. 12.--Luke 2:40-52.--

Golden Text--"Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."--Luke 2:52.

THIS brief narrative gives us a single glimpse at the youth of our Lord; but it reveals all that is important for us to know concerning him before he arrived at maturity. It shows us the wonderful prodigy of wisdom and grace, so developed at twelve years of age as to be able to cope with the reasoning powers and the learning of men far advanced in years, in so much that he astonished them with his understanding and answers.

We observe also that his superior ability did not puff him up nor cause him to forget the respect and deference

due to the advanced years and position of the Doctors and teachers. He was meek and lowly of heart, both as a boy and as a man. He was anxious also to learn of them from the law and the prophets. He did not miraculously know all that was in them; but he "grew in wisdom." He acquired knowledge, but with that ease, rapidity and retentiveness with which only a perfect mind can grasp and hold it.

His tarrying in the temple to receive the instructions of his Father's Word evidently was not in wilful disregard for his parents; but rather, was an evidence of his zeal to do his Father's will, which motive, in his childish simplicity, he seemed to think his mother and Joseph would fully realize and approve. This is apparent from his question,-- "Why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be in the courts of my Father?" No, they did not know. They could not understand the wonderful child. Bearing in mind subsequent expressions of more mature years which showed that his memory extended back to his previous existence with the Father before the world was, we have no reason to doubt that at the age of twelve his memory was active, and that he then knew what in after years he affirmed, saying,--"Before Abraham was, I am." "What and if ye shall see me ascend up where I was before?" "Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," etc.--John 8:58; 6:62; 17:5.

But his mother and Joseph understood him not. How could they? Mary silently pondered these things in her heart; but how could she understand this mystery of God? Jesus, seeing that he was not understood and remembering his duty of submission to parents, was subject to their wishes, and returned with them to Nazareth. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." In the retirement of his early life of preparation for his public ministry and great sacrifice, his virtues commanded the admiration of all who knew him. Praise God for this testimony of the human perfection of his dear Son!

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THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

--JAN. 19.--Luke 3:15-22.--

Golden Text--"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."--John 1:29.

SEVERAL points in this familiar narrative are worthy of special notice,--(1) The deep and wide influence of John's preaching. The prepared instruments of the Lord are powerful in his hand. The whole nation was aroused, the multitudes were baptized with the baptism of repentance (Mark 1:4,5), and the expectation of

the immediate advent of the Messiah was everywhere manifest.

(2) The humility and sincerity of John, which was not changed in the least by the popular favor, is seen in his denial of the suggestion that he might be the Messiah. Had he made the claim, how readily would the people have accepted it! But this prepared vessel of the Lord was so established in righteousness as to be superior to any such temptation.

(3) In disclaiming this honor for himself John compared his own work and the work of the coming Messiah and showed them the difference. Referring to himself he claimed great inferiority. And his own work he described as only a preparatory work,--"I indeed baptize you with water, but...he shall baptize you with the holy spirit and with fire." It is very manifest that all of the multitudes who were baptized with water were not baptized with the holy spirit. The baptism of the holy spirit came at Pentecost after the Lord was glorified, but only upon a small minority of the Jewish nation. The baptism of fire came later--in the end of the Jewish harvest (A.D. 70) when Jerusalem was destroyed and their national existence terminated in the midst of a great time of trouble. Verse 17 is in reference to the great separating work of the Jewish

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harvest and the gathering of the worthy remnant into the garner of the Gospel age, and the fiery judgments upon the unworthy chaff.

(4) In the baptism of Jesus we see that the ordinance received a new significance. His baptism was not unto repentance; for he had no sins to repent of. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) With the accustomed view of baptism, John declined to baptize Jesus in whom there was no sin, nevertheless, though he could not understand why he should desire it, John complied with his request--"Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."--Matt. 3:15.

The righteousness of God's law which could by no means clear the guilty (Exod. 34:7) without a satisfaction of the claims of justice by the sacrifice of a life for a life (Exod. 21:23; Lev. 24:17-21; Deut. 19:21), he was about to fulfil by the sacrifice of himself. He was about to give his flesh for the life of the world--giving his life for the life

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of Adam, in whom we were all condemned, that as all posterity were included in the condemnation, so they might likewise have a share in the redemption. And all who desire to follow in the footsteps of Christ must likewise present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable through Christ. Thus it becometh us [the Christ, Head and body], to fulfil all righteousness.

With the baptism of Christ, then, the ordinance received the new signification of entire consecration to God as living sacrifices, even unto death. And in this new view

of the matter some of the Jewish converts were baptized again. See the baptism of John and the baptism of Christ and his body, the Church, contrasted in Acts 19:3-5. See also TOWER for June 15, '93.

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THE EARLY MINISTRY OF JESUS.

--JAN. 26.--Luke 4:14-22.--

Golden Text--"And they were astonished at his doctrine; for his word was with power."--Luke 4:32.

WE HAVE before us in this lesson the greatest teacher that ever lived; and if we inquire wherein his power consisted, the answer is, It was the power of the holy spirit, which he had without measure. (John 3:34.) This is the secret of all power in the work of the Lord. Learning and worldly wisdom, or natural talents of fluency of speech, or oratory, are no substitutes for this indispensable requirement for the divine service. No preaching, no teaching is of value, except it be in the power of the holy spirit.

In this power our Lord Jesus came up from the wilderness into Galilee. How did he obtain this power? He obtained it in the same way his followers may obtain it; viz., by entire consecration to God, faithfulness to that consecration, and by communion with him in prayer and meditation upon his Word. The complete consecration our Lord had made and symbolized at Jordan; and while carefully studying the law and the prophets in order to an exact knowledge of the will of God, he had just endured a most subtle and severe conflict with the powers of darkness for forty days alone in the wilderness.* Through implicit faith in the wisdom, love and power of the Father, he came off that battlefield victorious, and filled with the power of that holy spirit which had given him the victory. Thus he was equipped with power from on high for the great work upon which he immediately entered. It was no wonder, indeed, that the people "were astonished at his doctrine; for his word was with power." "He taught them as one having authority [as one who knew the truth by an implicit faith in God which admitted of no doubt, and by the practical demonstration of its power upon his own heart], and not as the scribes who had no such power, and no such insight into the holy things of God.

It is thus, and only thus, that the followers of Christ may also gain this power which will mightily convince men of the truth, and which will compel respect for it, even in those who are not prepared to receive it into good and honest hearts. The preacher or teacher acceptable to God must, therefore, like the Lord, be first sincerely and fully consecrated to God. Then, when tried and tempted, he must prove his faithfulness to that consecration. Then let

him go forward in the work of the Lord with a resolute purpose, to do his will at all hazards of human approval or disapproval, or of human praise or persecution. Most likely, like the Lord himself, he will have some of both--at first some of the praise, but afterward the bitterness of persecution.

At first Jesus "taught in the synagogues, being glorified of all," "and all bore him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth;" but very soon his faithfulness to the truth, which rebuked their unrighteousness, turned the praise of the people into wrath and persecution. This is the reward that faithfulness to the truth is sure to bring in the present life; and those who find it so should rejoice in this fellowship in the sufferings of Christ. Every new trial of faith, patience and perseverance, and every new victory in such trial brings to the soldier of the cross added power of the holy spirit--a courage born of endurance, a confidence in God born of experience, and a zeal born of a human appreciation of the power and intrinsic worth of divine truth, and a fuller appreciation of the righteousness of God and of all his ways. In this light the Christian should view every trial that comes to him, and, by drawing near to God in it, seek that measure of his holy spirit which will enable him to overcome, and in the conflict to gain new strength for further service.

The text of our Lord's discourse on this occasion was chosen from Isaiah 61:1-3, which declared his commission from God to preach the gospel--"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach," etc. This was the object of his anointing with the holy spirit. And this anointing needed no supplement of human authority. No Jewish ecclesiastics or councils had anything to do with giving him this authority. It came, as he showed, from God alone, through his inspired prophet.

In this connection we are also reminded that, through him, this same anointing has come upon every true member of the body of Christ, which is the Church--"The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you." (1 John 2:27.) This anointing began at Pentecost, and has continued upon all who are truly the Lord's, even to the present day.

And not only so, but every member of the body, however humble or obscure, being "anointed to preach," is failing in his mission if he does not preach. Indeed, if he be filled with the spirit he must preach, being impelled to that service by a burning zeal, like him who said, "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up;" "It is my meat and drink to do thy will, O God." But preaching is not always public declaration. Every influence that we can send out from within the radius of our talents, be they one or many, or be they humble or brilliant, is preaching the gospel. Let us all, therefore, diligently apply ourselves to it, and let it be "in the power of the spirit."

It is very significant that our Lord in quoting this commission, quoted only so much of it as was to be fulfilled by

himself, the last phrase being, "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,"--the Gospel age, the time wherein the presenting of our bodies as living sacrifices would be acceptable to God. With this he closed the book and sat down, and said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Had he read the remainder of it he could not have claimed its fulfilment that day; for it was not yet time to preach the day of vengeance, nor yet to begin the great Millennial work foreshown in verse 3. The proclaiming of the day of vengeance belongs specially to this end of the age, and the whole commission applies to the Church entire. The message concerning day of vengeance is now due, and consequently is now being proclaimed by the "feet" members of the Christ.

*See our issue of August 1, 1894.

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CHART DISCOURSES.

THE Chart of the Ages is made a frontispiece to the first volume of MILLENNIAL DAWN, and is described by a chapter of said volume; but when, later, it was published separately, as a map mounted upon a spring roller (2 feet 6 in. x 5 feet), requests came in from every quarter for such amplified explanations as would enable friends of the truth to give comprehensive parlor talks from their wall charts. And it is to fill this requirement, and to enable many to tell the good tidings of great joy connectedly and systematically, that a little pamphlet has been published, giving three suggestive discourses upon the chart.

Many other discourses can profitably follow, and suggestions for some of them will be found in Chapters X., XI. and XII. of MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., and Chapter V. of VOL. II.

After interesting your friends or neighbors by the discourses on the chart, either loan or sell to them the volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN and get them to reading, and follow this up with assistance upon points which may seem to them obscure. Next we advise a weekly gathering of such, as a "Dawn Circle for Bible Study." A method for conducting these very profitable meetings is suggested in ZION'S WATCH TOWER, Sept. 15, '95, and Dec. 1, '95.

The price of the above described pamphlet is ten cents.

These will be ready for mailing about Feb. 1. Orders will be filled in rotation as received.

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BINDERS FOR ZION'S WATCH TOWER.

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YOUNG'S CONCORDANCE INDEX.

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VIEWS FROM THE TOWER.

"OVER sixty churches in New York have already joined a federation which hopes to band together the churches for all sorts of practical ends--charitable, humanitarian, social and reformatory." (The Golden Rule.) Similar federations are in progress in various cities.

"In Mobile, Alabama, a Methodist and a Jewish congregation united in a Thanksgiving-day service in the Jewish synagogue. Both ministers addressed the assemblage, and all united in singing." Of course, Christ was not preached nor his name mentioned in the thanksgiving, for fear of offence to the Jews. Are such thanks acceptable to God who specifies the name of Jesus as the only one by which he can be approached? Could such a service help the Jews to recognize Christ, the crucified? Are unions or federations which ignore the principles and doctrines of God's Word at all desirable? We would rather stand alone with God upon his terms than unite with millions upon any

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other. Individual freedom and mutual cooperation upon the lines laid down in the Scriptures is God's way, and hence our way.

Chicago, anxious to please all classes, has arranged to have the Bible read in her public schools, and a committee made up of Protestants, Catholics and Hebrews is appointed whose duty it will be to select "non-sectarian passages" of Scripture for this use. That committee will have a difficult task. It is possible that the framers of that law intended to prove to the people the impossibility of suiting the ideas of all. Hebrews would probably object to the New Testament as a whole, and Catholics, Hebrews and Protestants would dispute about which version or translation of the Old Testament they should use.

Evidently, the religious instruction of children should be in the care of their parents and their chosen religious guides, and not mixed with secular studies which should be compulsory and under the supervision of the state. Attempts to unite the two must prove disadvantageous until God's absolute and infallible Kingdom shall have obtained control.

* * *

The Czar of Russia has through the Procurator-General of the Holy Synod brought to an end the persecution of Stundists and others in his Baltic provinces. The procurator excuses the change of his policy, thus: "The Orthodox [Greek] Church is showing gratifying growth in those parts," and "extraordinary measures need no longer be taken by the authorities to help forward the work." Thank God! it

will not be long until the power to persecute will be taken from the Mohammedans and Greek Catholics, as it has already in civilized lands been taken from the Church of Rome.

* * *

The Emperor of Germany seems bent upon crushing Socialism regardless of consequences. Even moderate objections to his government are prosecuted as treasonable disrespect. In addition, the Chief of Police of Berlin gave notice of the summary closing of eleven Social-Democratic clubs of that city--six Reichstag clubs, the Socialist Press Committee, the Agitation Committee, the Local Socialist Committee, the Club of Party Delegates and the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany. The effect will be to unify and strengthen the Socialists, who are already a powerful third in the Reichstag.

The Emperor's heart and the hearts of his counsellors are evidently failing, for fear and for looking forward to those things which are coming upon the earth. He is putting the whole weight of the government upon the safety valve, to stop the noise of the people clamoring for liberty. We agree with him that the liberty desired would bring fallen

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men to license and anarchy; but we can read, as he probably can not, the sentence of present governments, as recorded in God's Word,--Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin,--Babylon, thou art tried in the balances, and found wanting. Thank God! the fall means but a brief though awful chaos, and then the establishment of God's Kingdom in the hands of Christ.

"The tide of Socialism is rising in France. M. Bourgeois has carried his graduation succession duties by a majority of 404 to 125. They are probably the most extreme in the civilized world, and for a precedent you must go to Oriental countries. There the ruler takes what he likes, or what he can get. In France the new ruler begins by exempting all estates under two thousand dollars--a premium on poverty to start with, and a bid for the votes of the peasantry and the workingmen. From exemption he passes by easy stages to confiscation, ending by taking one-fifth of the entire property devised to strangers."--N.Y. Herald.

This seems to us a more equitable and a wiser taxation than the Income Tax. Society has a claim upon a share of the money accumulated under its protection, when the accumulator is done with it. This method would induce some of the wealthy to dispense their means more liberally while alive, to see to its use. Apparently few of the saints are wealthy; but such as have wealth should regard this as a part of their stewardship, one of their talents, for which they will be required to give an account. "Ye are not your own," applies to all that we have, money, influence, time,

all. If the measure of our self-denial in the interest of the Lord and the truth is the measure of our love, we can neither afford to neglect the cultivation of this love nor to neglect opportunities for manifesting it to the Lord and to ourselves, however we may modestly seek to hide it from our fellow men.

* * *

We learn that Joseph Rabinowitz, the converted Jew, purposes shortly to remove from Kischenev to Palestine, expecting that the latter will prove to be a better center from which to carry on his missionary work among his kinsmen according to the flesh. This we believe will be a good move. We urged him to make it when we visited him in 1891, and again when he visited us in 1893. Although he will be leaving a city containing nearly as many Jews as are in all Palestine, we believe that those who have returned to the "land of promise" would prove the more receptive--if not now, very shortly, when "the time of Jacob's trouble" shall be upon them there. They need instruction, whether they hear or forbear, to prepare them by and by to acknowledge the earthly phase of the Kingdom when it shall be established among them.

* * *

It does not seem to be generally known that Jews (not converts to Christ or Islam) have not been allowed to settle in Palestine since August 1891, and only a few are permitted to enter as visitors with fifteen to thirty day permits. This edict of the Sultan of Turkey went into effect just before we reached there. No Jews have been permitted to settle there since. Items published in newspapers telling about thousands of Jews going to Palestine, etc., are either fabrications or else five-year-old items republished. We expect, however, that by the time European persecutions shall again become hot against the Jews the door to Palestine will somehow be unbarred.

* * *

The London Review of Reviews says:--

"In Austria, the form taken by social discontent is that of a violent agitation against the Jews. Dr. Lueger's reelection as Mayor of Vienna, with the consequent dissolution of the City Council, led to a debate in the Reichsrath, which was interesting as revealing the savagery with which the Jews are hated in Vienna. One of the speakers was not ashamed to assert that at Jewish festivals the food is sprinkled with a dark dust which is made from Christian blood! There is reason to believe that if the masses had their way in Central Europe, the Jews would lose their eye teeth, if indeed they were permitted to escape with their lives. It really seems as if it will be necessary before long to reconstitute the Kingdom of Jerusalem, if only to give

the Jews a center from which diplomatic intervention would be possible on behalf of the scattered and peeled remnant of the children of Israel."

* * *

"The Bishop of Jerusalem declares that a great change of front toward Christianity is taking place among Jews all over the world. There is an avowal of disapproval of the crucifixion of Christ; there is admission of his claim to be a Prophet; to be the Messiah, at least of the Gentiles; to be the holiest of the sons of men. The assertion of the Yemenite Jew, 'Our fathers never returned from the captivity until now; we are not chargeable with the black deed of the rulers against Jesus;' is but the expression of a widespread desire to reverse the imprecation of eighteen centuries past; it seems like a prayer, 'May his blood be forgiven to us and to our children!'"

It is reported that a Russian Jew, recently converted to Christ, in a hospital in Smyrna, has begun preaching the newly found Messiah among the Russian Jews there with great success. A Jewish Christian Society has been started, and already is reported to have nearly two hundred adherents, who are being persecuted by kinsmen after the flesh.

It is the time to expect such movements. The time for the beginning of a return of divine favor was 1878, and beginning there it has been steadily progressing since.

* * *

Dr. Ahlwardt, the German Jew-hater, who came to this country to arouse hatred toward the Jews--but without success--in answer to the question, By what means do you propose to put an end to Jewish influence in Germany? said,--

"It can be done only by educating the masses, and getting the right sort of representatives into the Reichstag. For one thing, legislation should be enacted against ownership of land by Jews. Forty-seven per cent. of the agricultural land in Germany is owned by Jews, and they hold mortgages upon most of the remainder. Of course, we have not been able yet to pass any of the laws we advocate, as we have only seventeen representatives in the Reichstag.

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Anti-Semitism has spread fast recently, and the people are coming to see the corrupting influences of Judaism. Our support comes chiefly from the middle and poorer classes, who have suffered from the greed and unscrupulousness of the Jews. The lower clergy, both Catholic and Protestant, are nearly all with us."

No doubt there is considerable truth in this charge, and, taken together with the fact that Jews seldom so violate the laws as to get into prison, suggests the thought that their experiences under the Law of Moses have not been

valueless to them. They are law-abiding so far as the letter of the law is concerned, but use all the ingenuity of their active minds in avoiding and circumventing the spirit of it. Outwardly they are very obedient to the law; but they

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do not recognize that love to God and the neighbor is the essence of the Law.

Nevertheless, under the new Millennial laws they will be found amongst the most pliable and consequently will be amongst the first to be blest by the new order of things; and by and by no doubt many of them will learn that the whole Law is comprehended in the one word, Love: and, learning this, many doubtless will obey it from the heart, and become "sheep" of the Millennial fold. (John 10:16.) God foreseeing this made them certain promises which cannot fail (Rom. 11:25-32), and their trouble, now brewing in Germany, will only serve to drive them out and to prepare them for the fulfilment of the divine covenants.

* * *

The Turkish question seems to be subsiding. It is settling itself. The German Emperor is averse to meddling with any ruler's control of his own subjects,--evidently fearing that at some time it might be a precedent for interference with his control of the Social-Democrats. Russia believes that she will get cheaper and more satisfactory possession by and by, when some other war is on foot involving other powers, and is not anxious now. France does what Russia does, and England, the only hope of the Armenians, is impelled by caution (in view of Venezuelan and South African difficulties) to let Turkey alone.

The matter is rapidly settling itself by the Armenians becoming Mohammedans, as the only escape from death. Thus quickly can threatening wars be averted, and the winds of strife held back, that the sealing of the servants of God may be first accomplished, as suggested in our last issue.

* * *

While the general tendency among prominent Protestants is toward skepticism and open infidelity of the Dr. Briggs type (We do not mean Atheism, the denial of a personal God, for few are so blind and foolish--Psa. 14:1--but Infidelity in the sense of disbelief in the Bible and the record of the fall, redemption and restitution as therein set forth), still there is another movement progressing vigorously --a return to formalism and ceremonialism, as represented in Roman Catholicism. The more ignorant gravitate to the Romanists, and the more cultured and wealthy to the Episcopal church. St. Ignatius Church of New York City is one of the favorites with the latter, and is known as a high-church. Another, recently finished at a cost of half a

million dollars, is known as The Church of St. Mary the Virgin. At both of these churches the Romish ceremonials are in vogue, and Masses are celebrated, as by Roman Catholics. (For the significance of the Mass see MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. II., page 324, and Vol. III., pages 98-104.) The next few years will witness alarming progress in both of these opposite directions, as well as toward mere Moralism. Thousands will thus fall, from the only standing (in Christ) which has divine favor and recognition, on every side of those who abide under the shadow of the Almighty, rooted and grounded in the promises of God's Word and firmly fixed upon the ransom, the rock of salvation.

But, thank God, their fall is not an everlasting fall, but only a part of the present sifting and shaking in which only his "elect," his "saints," shall be able to stand--the falling of the false that the true may be made manifest. (1 Cor. 11:19.) When the Millennial Sun of Righteousness shall have arisen and scattered the mists of error, many now stumbling blindly will, we trust, be recovered. Those, however, who have been granted the light of present truth, and who are cast out as unworthy of it, seem to be in a more serious condition--apparently in danger of the hopeless "second death."

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BOAST IN THE LORD.

"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciseth loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."

"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?" "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."-- Jer. 9:23,24; 1 Cor. 1:20,31.

THINGS highly esteemed among men are wisdom, power and riches. But it is not the wisdom that cometh down from above, nor the power of godliness, nor the true heavenly riches that moth cannot destroy nor rust corrupt that is sought after by the world. Men of the world have not learned the value of these, and therefore they "spend their strength for naught, and their labor for that which satisfieth not." "The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" the faith that lays hold upon the might of the Lord is the beginning of power; and the poverty that freely surrenders all things to the will and service of God is the beginning of true riches. Worldly

wisdom, which has not its foundation in the reverence of the Lord, tends to self-exaltation and pride; power in the hands of the ungodly tends to haughtiness and overbearing selfishness; and riches, among those who have not learned from God the responsibilities of stewardship, tend only to dwarf the soul, rendering it impervious to the noble sentiments of love and brotherly kindness.

The man who, by dint of labor and strife, succeeds in a measure in gaining one or all of these earthly prizes generally considers himself a wise man; for he does not realize how transient are the treasures, how unsatisfactory they will prove in the end, what snares are in them, nor how great is the value of the heavenly treasure which he has missed while grasping after fleeting earthly things.

To the worldly who have never known the treasures of divine grace these earthly things are of paramount importance; but to the child of God, if possessed, they only increase the responsibilities of his stewardship; for they are not his, but the Lord's, all being included in his consecration. Whatever he has of human learning--education--must be held in subservience to the wisdom of God. No human theories or philosophies that conflict with the Word of God may be entertained. A "Thus saith the Lord" must be the end of all controversy when human reasonings come in conflict with divine wisdom; for the wisdom of this world that arrays itself in opposition to the heavenly wisdom is "foolishness with God," and will by and by be brought to most ignominious humiliation. So also the human might that lifts its puny arm in defiance of Jehovah's power shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy, and the hoarded riches shall be scattered to the winds.

What folly is it then--especially for any one who has been enlightened by the truth, and made a child and heir of God--to forget the importance and value of the unseen heavenly treasure and turn to minding earthly things. For any to glory in such a course is to glory in their shame and folly. But let it not be so with us: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." "Let him glory in this," saith the Lord, "that he understandeth and knoweth me." "And this is life eternal," said Jesus, "that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."--John 17:3.

This is the knowledge that does not puff up, the wisdom that cometh down from above. The beginning of this wisdom is indeed the reverence of the Lord. Nor can we grow in this wisdom except by continued growth in the reverence of the Lord. If to any degree we cease to reverence supremely the Lord's words, or if we cease to cultivate his acquaintance through our privilege of communion and fellowship with him in prayer, in the study of his Word, meditation upon his glorious character and teachings, and

in obedience to his will, to the extent of our neglect we fail to realize the blessings of that wisdom that cometh down from above.

But if, in the use of these privileges, we open our hearts to receive all that divine grace has in store for us, then, indeed, we may glory in the Lord. Let such a one "glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me." To thus know the Lord is not merely to know of him, to know something of his works and ways, but it is to know him by that intimate fellowship and communion which, by a living faith, seals the testimonies of his Word upon our hearts and makes us to realize that they are ours personally, that the Lord himself is our personal friend and helper and counselor and guide. We thus become acquainted with his spirit, his principles and methods of action,--we understand him,--we know how to interpret his providences, to mark his leadings, to observe his attitude toward us and thus daily to walk with him. Thus also we are led to a fuller appreciation of the Lord's righteousness and of his loving kindness, which will in due time establish justice in all the earth. Well, indeed, may we glory in the Lord and in the fact of his great condescension to us personally, when thus we come to understand and know him.

In this blessed sense of the divine love and care, we may say in the words of the Psalmist, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord. I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him."--Psa. 34:1-9.

How precious is this experience of the child of God! but it can never be the experience of a proud heart; "for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace [his favor] to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Pet. 5:5,6.) It is hard for those who are rich in the wisdom or power or wealth of this world to do this. (Matt. 19:24-26.) It was hard for the scribes and Pharisees who were rich in titles and honors and praise of men; it was hard for the whole Jewish nation who were proud of being the seed of Abraham to whom pertained the promises of God; it was hard for the Greeks who were proud of their worldly wisdom and intellectual attainments; it was hard for the Romans who were proud of their power and prestige among the nations. And it is hard to-day for all those who have pride in any thing. It is hard for all religionists whose pride in the sectarian religious systems of Christendom blinds their eyes to the truth now due; it is hard also for those who boast in human philosophies and science, falsely so called; who are proud of being inventors of something new and strange, and who desire to be thought great and to

lead men after them; it is hard for all those who reverence the opinions of men more than the words of the Lord. All those who either are rich or desire to be rich in the things

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of this present life, and specially those who are "rich" in a good opinion of themselves, or in self will, find it hard to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. Indeed, the Apostle intimates that the greatest battle of each one coming to a knowledge of the truth is along this line; for it is after pointing to the severe humiliation of our Lord Jesus that he says, "Wherefore, my beloved, work out your own salvation [in like manner] with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you [by this severe discipline, this humbling process] both to will and to do of his good pleasure."--Phil. 2:12,13.

Those who have endeavored in all sincerity to do so have always found the grace of God sufficient for them; but very few are ever disposed to make the attempt. To all the worldly-wise the preaching of the cross is foolishness, and they have no disposition to take up their cross daily and follow Christ.

It is for this reason that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" to share with the Lord in the glory of his Kingdom. They are generally so engrossed with the things of the present life --its pursuits, its cares, its pleasures, etc.--that they have no ear for the Lord's call. They are not humble enough even to hear the call; much less are they humble enough to obey it and to walk the narrow way of self-sacrifice in which the Lord leads.

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world [those who are not noted for worldly wisdom or influence or wealth] to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world [the humble poor], and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." (1 Cor. 1:26-29.) How truly the wise are being confounded to-day by the power of the truth in the hands of the humblest of God's consecrated children! Systems of error which are the growth of centuries are put to confusion and are tottering before it, and the sages of all the sects are troubled by it; for it is becoming more and more apparent to all men that "the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."--Isa. 29:14.

Why has God chosen these weak, inferior instruments for his great work? why does he not employ the eloquent tongues, the pens of ready writers, and the prestige of great names? Paul tells us why. It is in order "that no flesh should glory in his presence." The great work of vanquishing sin and establishing righteousness in the earth is the Lord's work: no human power is adequate to the emergencies of the case. Yet God is pleased to allow his power

to operate through any human instrument that is meet for his use; i.e., that can be used without injury to itself. If God were to work his wonders through those whose hearts are inclined to pride, that pride would grow, and would arrogate to self the glory that belongs to God, instead of appreciating the honor of being a servant of God, an instrument in his mighty hand--"for the Master's use made meet."

The Lord's use of even the weakest instruments, of those having even a very small measure of talent for his service, sometimes proves an exaltation too great, and that which was a blessing becomes a curse through pride and vain-glory. Such is the perversity of human nature, and such the subtlety of the Adversary in gaining the advantage, that the very texts above cited sometimes become a stumbling-block to many who are not only poor financially, but who are deficient in intellect and education, and who even lack instruction in the divine Word. They forget that the Lord said, "Blessed are ye poor i.e., those who were poor (or became so) as his disciples]" (Luke 6:20); or, as Matthew (5:3) records it, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." And they forget that the ignorant as well as the learned, the poor as well as the rich, can become "puffed up in their fleshly mind." It is sad to see "a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing" (Gal. 6:3), thus deceiving himself,--but specially so, when even the rudiments of education and Christlikeness are lacking. We believe that modesty and simplicity are traits to be cultivated by rich and poor alike, who are blessed with a knowledge of the truth, and that any "confounding of the mighty" should be done kindly and in meekness (Eph. 4:2; 2 Tim. 2:25), and not in a combative spirit or with a show of gratification over their defeat.

Above almost every thing else, therefore, beloved, let us guard well our humility. It is only when we are little in our own eyes that God can use us with safety to ourselves. And yet he does not shield us from every test of fidelity. If therefore the Lord gives you a little exaltation to-day, a little encouragement of success in his service, receive it humbly, meekly remembering your own unworthiness and insufficiency except as God is pleased to work through you; and be just as ready to receive the humiliations of tomorrow as necessary for your discipline and the proper balancing of your character. If the success of yesterday makes you fret under the humiliation of to-day, then beware: you are not as roundly developed spiritually as you should be. Whatever may be the triumphs of the truth through us, let us always remember that we are among "the things that are not." Let us endeavor therefore to make the Apostle Paul's experience our own, who said,-- "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere, and in all things, I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry, and to abound and to suffer need. I can do all [these] things through Christ which strengtheneth me."--Phil. 4:11-13.

In God's dealings with his people at all times we can see his care in guarding them against pride and self-sufficiency. If he would choose Israel to be his peculiar people, he permits them first to be enslaved for four hundred years,

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and then with a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm he gathers them to the promised land. Moses, too, the chosen deliverer, was of humble birth. He was slow of speech, and needed Aaron to supplement this weakness. And Paul had his "thorn in the flesh," from which the Lord was not pleased to deliver him, though thrice he besought the Lord to remove it; and the Lord said unto him, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness [i.e., my strength, operating through this imperfect earthen vessel, will be more manifest to men than if the vessel were a perfect and polished one. In that case men might ascribe the greatness of the work to the talent of

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Paul, and by and by conclude that since Paul is only a man it is only presumption for him to assume to teach other men, etc. But if the power is seen to be of God, and merely working through Paul as a ready instrument--meek, willing and energetic--then the testimony of the grace of God will be weighty with them: and so it was]."

To this explanation and assurance from the Lord Paul meekly replied, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."--2 Cor. 12:8,9.

The Lord with unerring wisdom has always chosen the meek for every great work. Moses was the meekest man in all the earth. (Num. 12:3.) Meekness was a marked characteristic of all the prophets and ancient worthies. The Lord Jesus was meek and lowly of heart (Matt. 11:29), who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor. He was of humble birth, born in a manger and reared in the despised town of Nazareth, that he might be called a Nazarene. The twelve apostles were all plain men, mostly fishermen; and so also the whole Gospel Church--not the church nominal, but the true ones written in heaven--have generally been the poor of this world, who were willing to be humbled yet more and more, that the power of Christ might be manifested through them.

Let every one therefore humble himself under the mighty hand of God. This is not the time for exaltation, but for humiliation and trial. The exaltation will come in due time to the faithful. Let our present glory be in that we understand and know the Lord, and in that he condescends to make use of these poor earthen vessels in his service, that it may be manifest to all men that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of men.--2 Cor. 4:7.

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THE PROMISE.

"Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord,
and he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you."
Acts 3:19-21.

There are verses in my Bible
That bring solace and delight;
On my way-worn spirit shining
Like a day-star in the night;
For my faith now holds the promise
Of a grand and glad reward,--
Since refreshing times are coming
From the presence of the Lord.

While I tread life's rugged pathway,
Through the calm and stormy years;
As I hear the wails of anguish,
And behold the gushing tears;
I might fail to see God's goodness,
And surrender to despair,
If I could not read my Bible
And his promise written there.

When I hear the bondman cursing
Cruel hands that forged his chain;
When I scent the smoke of carnage,
And recount the mangled slain;
I might own the prince infernal
As creation's reigning lord,
If I could not read the promise
And believe its cheering word.

While the pliant mind of childhood
Is estranged by errors vile,
And the lips so pure and loving
Are instilled with curse and guile;
While the spotless form of virtue
Is befouled with hands of lust,
I can still look up to heaven
And believe that God is just.

Oh! the better day is dawning
When the Judge shall take his seat,
And this murderous tide of error
Shall ebb out in swift retreat.
Then the resurrected creature
Shall the Lord's salvation see,
Can repent of former follies
And "in Christ" henceforth be free.

Would you know what makes me trustful
When the clouds obscure the sun?

Would you know what makes me cheerful
When life's race is almost run?
There's a book mark in my Bible
That will point you to the line
That has filled my saddened spirit
With the rays of hope divine.

For my faith now holds the promise
Of a grand and glad reward:
Since refreshing times are coming
From the presence of the Lord.

See Isa. 25:6-8.

G. M. BILLS.

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THE POWER OF JESUS.

--FEB. 2.--Luke 5:17-26.--

Golden Text--"The Son of Man hath power
upon earth to forgive sins."--Luke 5:24.

THE statement of verse 17 shows the rapidly growing influence of our Lord even at this early stage of his ministry. From the wilderness scene of temptation and victory he had gone into Galilee filled with the power of the holy spirit, and his fame had gone out through all that region. He had taught in their synagogues and been glorified of all. He had come down to Capernaum, and the people were astonished at his doctrine, for his word was with power. He had healed the sick and the lepers, and had cast out devils, and the multitudes thronged about him continually. And so great was the attention which his teaching and his works attracted that Pharisees and doctors of the law came out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem to hear and to see.--Luke 4:14-16,22.

We next notice the great faith that so perseveringly brought the palsied patient to the attention of the Great Physician. Being unable to reach Jesus through the crowds that continually thronged about him, so great was their faith in his healing power that they removed a portion of the tiling from the roof, and, with his couch, let him down over the heads of the people. This persevering, trusting faith in Christ speedily received its reward--the forgiveness of sins and healing.

We notice that the forgiveness of sins was the first blessing--"And when Jesus saw their faith [the faith of the sick man and those interested in him], he said unto him, "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee." This evidently was an unlooked for answer. The previous miracles of healing doubtless led all to expect a similar manifestation of healing power; but as yet it was not manifest. There lay the sufferer before them all while the people pondered this claim

of the man of Nazareth to have power on earth to forgive sins, probably while the Lord was proceeding with his discourse, not allowing this incident to interrupt it entirely.

But there were some whisperings among the scribes and Pharisees present, who said, This is blasphemy. Who can forgive sins but God alone? Though their murmuring words did not reach the ear of the Lord, he perceived their thoughts. Their cynical faces doubtless told the tale of their scorn and unbelief; and their influence upon the people who looked to them as leaders and teachers was also manifest. Has this man indeed power to forgive sins? has he authority from God to this effect? is he indeed the Messiah, the sent of God?--these were the questions revolving in the minds of the people. And it was to awaken these thoughts that the Lord had said it. His words implied the claim of Messiahship. Truly none could forgive sins but God alone, except as his anointed and authorized agent and representative, and in his appointed way. The divinely appointed way for the cancellation of sins was by means of the ransom as the legal settlement of the penalty, and faith in Christ the Redeemer.

The faith of this man and his friends in Christ and his claims had been put to the test and manifested, and though the ransom price had not yet been actually given, the Lamb for sacrifice had already been presented by our Lord at his baptism, and had been accepted of God and was on the altar of sacrifice. And therefore, in view of the complete consuming and acceptableness to God of that sacrifice, Jesus, perceiving their faith, could then say, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

We observe that the healing did not follow as a result of the forgiveness of sins. The forgiveness of sins was one thing, and the healing was another; and Jesus intimates that the same divine authority that was necessary to the forgiveness of sins was also necessary to the healing; and that if the forgiveness of sins was blasphemy, so also was the healing. From what they had seen, they must all admit his power, and consequently also his authority, to heal, and that the authority and power must be of God. And this power and authority they must therefore recognize as the divine testimony of his claims to be the Son of God and the Messiah of Israel. "Whether is easier," said he, "to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Rise up and walk;" for the same authority and power are necessary to both. "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he said to the palsied man), I say unto thee, Arise and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all astonished, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day."

Thus our Lord called attention to his miracles of healing as the divine testimonials of his claims to be the Son of God and the long-looked-for Messiah of Israel, to whom was intrusted the great work of taking away the sin of the

world, and subsequently of healing men of all their infirmities, these all being part of the wages of sin. "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world!" said John; and Jesus endorsed that saying by his subsequent claim to have power on earth to forgive sins. And the Father also endorsed his claim by granting him the power to do many wonderful works in the sight of all the people.

While the forgiveness of sins is an assurance that the healing, or removal of the penalty of sin, will surely follow, as the palsied man doubtless considered it and waited for the healing, it does not signify that the recovery from the penalty will immediately follow. The Gospel Church, for instance, receives the forgiveness of sins in this Gospel age; but not until the dawning of the Millennium will she be delivered from the bondage of corruption. But in due time the power that accomplishes the one will accomplish the other also; and by and by those miracles of grace which brought health and gladness to so many in Israel, and which attracted the attention and were the astonishment of that whole nation, will be totally eclipsed by the wonder-working power and authority of this same Jesus exalted to power and dominion over the whole earth as the mighty Prince of peace, who, having in the days of his flesh redeemed the world by the sacrifice of himself, comes again to heal all their infirmities and to restore them to the fulness of divine favor in which is eternal life and peace.

Blessed be God! it is as easy to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, as to say, Rise up and walk, and vice versa; for both the authority and the power are committed unto Jehovah's Anointed, in whom is all our hope and all our trust.

It will be observed that all the healings performed by our Lord were both instantaneous and complete, showing the fulness of his authority and power, and they included the worst forms of disease--leprosy, palsy, blindness from birth, and even awakenings from death. In all these respects

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they differed from the healings we hear of to-day, many of which are somewhat remarkable; and when the agents and agencies employed are not in opposition to the Lord and his truth, we are justified in accepting them as slight intimations to men that the times of restitution are at hand, and as a preparation for the great restoring work which may be expected as soon as the world's great tribulation is past.

Other manifestations of healing power through agencies in subtle opposition to the Lord and his Word of truth, such, for instance, as Christian Science, so called, we can only regard as the efforts of Satan to offset the power of God, which is now occasionally and partially manifested as a mere intimation of coming blessings to lead men gradually to expect their fulness.*

*See The Epistle of James, in our issue of May 15, '92.

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THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

--FEB. 9.--Luke 6:41-49.--

Golden Text--"Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"--Luke 6:46.

THIS portion of our Lord's sermon suggests several important thoughts:--(1) That it is wrong to encourage in one's self a fault-finding disposition, even though the faults of others, if not our own, must be manifest and often painful to us. True brotherly love remembers that we are all imperfect in various ways, that while our neighbors' faults are unpleasant to us, ours may be equally unpleasant to them; and as we desire to have our neighbors considerate of our lameness from the fall and to have patience with our weaknesses, so, in the same brotherly love, we should exercise a similar forbearance.

(2) The Lord's words imply that a persistent fault-finding disposition, which ignores the faults of self and magnifies those of others, is mere hypocrisy--a vain pretension to a zeal for righteousness which is not sincere. A sincere zeal for righteousness will always begin with self-discipline; and in proceeding to help others will endeavor to do so with skill and carefulness, and as gently as possible, remembering the slow and painful processes of one's own self-correction and self-culture.

If any man does not submit his own heart to the leading and teaching of the Lord, he has no authority from him to teach others to do so. And for such to presume to do so, as did the Pharisees and doctors of the law, is hypocrisy, as the Lord plainly indicated. (See also Matt. 23:2-7,13.) "Unto the wicked [those who know what is right and do it not, who refuse to practise what they preach], God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee?" (Psa. 50:16,17.) Only those who, being fully consecrated to the Lord, have received the anointing of his holy spirit, are commissioned of God to preach the gospel and serve the household of faith. And only such as continually and faithfully submit themselves to the leading of the spirit of God, out of the old paths of sin and uncleanness, into the paths of holiness, are worthy or able to perform the skilful service of teaching and serving the Lord's household.

(3) The Lord points to the common acts and words of our daily life as the index of our hearts, saying, "A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt

tree bring forth good fruit; for every tree is known by his own fruit." So also, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh."

Thus it appears that all of our words and actions in the little as well as in the great things of life testify in judgment, either for or against us, every day. With what carefulness, then, should we guard every act and word of life; and if overtaken in a fault, we should quickly repent and seek forgiveness, remembering that "If any man sin, we have an advocate," etc.--1 John 2:1,2.

(4) Our attention is called to the necessity of doing, as well as hearing, the words of the Lord. To do as the Lord indicated, signified, not an insincere outward show of righteousness (calling attention to one's own good deeds by contrasting them with the failures of others, and at the same time being blind to deeper and graver personal faults), but it signified radical and thorough reform, a digging down deep through all the rubbish of pride and conceit and laying well the foundations of a sincere and righteous character. Digging deep for a sure foundation upon which to rear such a superstructure, we find nothing solid until we come to Christ the rock. (1 Cor. 10:4; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:7,8.) In ourselves we find no ground of stability upon which to rear our building of character and faith. Nor is there stability in anything which other men can furnish. Human resolutions and human theories are all sandy foundations which cannot insure permanence in the storms of life. But those who are rooted and grounded in Christ and built up in him--in his doctrine, his love, and his character --shall never be moved. When the floods of temptation rise and in a steady stream beat against that house, it shall not be moved; for its strength is in Christ, the solid rock upon which it is founded.

Those not thus founded in Christ will surely fall: their faith will surely be swept away; and character must necessarily suffer from the decline of faith.

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THE GREAT HELPER.

--FEB. 16.--Luke 7:2-16.--

Golden Text--"And there came a fear on all; and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet is risen among us, and God hath visited his people."--Luke 7:16.

IN THIS narrative a believing Gentile is brought to our attention whose faith and humility are worthy of imitation. An officer among the Roman soldiers on duty in Palestine, he had come in contact with God's people and

law and from these had learned something of the righteousness of God, of his wonderful leading and teaching of his people, and of the promises given to them. Evidently these things had awakened in him feelings of reverence for God and love for righteousness and truth. These sentiments towards the God of Israel found expression in special kindness toward his people; and, being a man of means, he had built a synagogue for some of them.

Evidently he was naturally a benevolent man, well disposed, and had a heart, which, had he been born an Israelite

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and entitled to the privileges of that elect nation, would have proved to be good soil in which the good seed of the Kingdom, planted by our Lord, would have brought forth good results and have constituted him one of the "brethren." This is attested not only by his faith, but also by the fact that his servant was "dear unto him," so loved that he went to much trouble to secure his healing. In his humility he felt unworthy of our Lord's favors, realizing, as did the Syrophenician woman, that the Gentiles were as "dogs" who could have only the crumbs from the children's table. Hence he got the elders of his city to request the Master to heal his servant; and they urged his request before our Lord, saying that he was a good man, "He loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue."

The beauty of the centurion's faith and humility was specially manifest in his afterthought and message of apology to the Lord for having asked him to come to his house to see his servant; for he felt that in so doing he had only put him on a par with other physicians, and besides was taking him away from other and more important work: hence his message, I am unworthy that you should come under my roof; but being myself a man clothed with authority, and accustomed to doing things by my servant's hands, I know that you can do the same on a higher plane with your servants and agents: therefore simply speak the word of command, and it shall be done.

This simple, noble faith and humility were very pleasing to the Lord, who declared, "I have not found so great faith,--no not in Israel," where he had much more reason to expect it. His faith was rewarded by the healing of his servant, and our Lord, who had received his message through the Elders at Capernaum (verse 3), and who had already started toward the Centurion's house, discontinued his journey and instantly granted the healing of the servant.

Impressed by the faith and goodness of this Centurion, so unexpected among Roman soldiers, we were considering that it would be "just like the Lord" to send the gospel to such a noble Gentile soon after the Jewish favor would end, when the doors of divine love and mercy would be opened to Gentiles as well as Israelites. Then the Lord brought to our memory Cornelius, the first Gentile to whom the gospel message was sent. (Acts 10:1-8.) We remembered that he also was a Centurion, and of him also it is

recorded that he was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." It is not probable that among the Roman soldiers of Palestine there were two Centurions of such similarly exceptional character. The residence of the Centurion mentioned by Luke is not stated but that of Cornelius is mentioned: it was Caesarea. Turning to Map No. 10 in a Teacher's Bible we found with no little pleasure that the distance from Capernaum to Caesarea is only about 45 miles, and that Nain is on the way, a little to the East, about 20 miles from Capernaum. We note also the remark of Peter, when preaching Christ and his gospel to Cornelius (Acts 10:37), to the effect that Cornelius already knew the word which Jesus had preached throughout all Judea. In our judgment the circumstantial evidences are strong that the Centurion of our lesson was Cornelius. This would also explain why the holy spirit was poured out on Cornelius and his house even while Peter yet spake, and before it is even stated that Cornelius accepted Christ; for apparently he had already done so, as narrated by Luke.

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It was just like the Lord, too, to keep in mind this exceptional character among the Gentiles, and when the due time came for the gospel to be preached to the Gentiles, to send it to him first. "Them that honor me, I will honor," saith the Lord; and so it appears in this case that the Centurion was doubly honored, first in the granting of his request and in the friendship and commendation of the Lord; and subsequently in being the first Gentile to receive the holy spirit of adoption as a son and heir of God.

The power manifested by Jesus in reawakening the young man of Nain was another proof of his Messiahship which none of his enemies could gainsay or resist; and the people drew from this potent argument the only legitimate conclusion. There came a reverential fear on all; for they felt that this was indeed the great prophet sent of God, and that in him God had visited his people to bless them with his love and grace; and they glorified God.

If the people had only followed their convictions, based upon such indubitable testimony, how greatly they would have been blessed! But instead of doing this, they afterward stifled their convictions and weakly leaned upon the judgment of their blind guides; and by and by, with few exceptions, notwithstanding all the testimony of his wonderful teachings and mighty works, and notwithstanding all that the prophets wrote concerning him, which was plainly fulfilled in him, they stumbled into unbelief and crucified the Lord's Anointed. Let children of God to-day beware of a similar mistake, and when convinced of the truth, hold it fast in a good and honest heart and promptly acknowledge it, lest blindness come upon them; remembering the Lord's words,--"He that is ashamed of me and my words, of him will I be ashamed."

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"OUT OF DARKNESS INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT."

Virginia.

DEAR SIR:--Recently, while waiting on a patient, on looking around for something to read, I came upon the second volume of MILLENNIAL DAWN. I became much interested in it; and upon inquiry, I learned that my patient had all three volumes, which she kindly loaned me. They had been in the house, she told me, several years, but they had evidently never been read. I have read them all, not as carefully as I should have liked, and found in them much food for thought. Your calculation as to the time of the end seems to be very plausible. I am not able to pick any flaw in it, unless I say that I have always had the idea that God never intended that any one should know in advance when the end would come. Of course, this idea of mine may be a very erroneous one, and certainly is worth absolutely nothing if there is any Scriptural proof against it. Your calculations, made in different ways and from different standpoints, do seem very conclusive, the one based upon the Jubilee striking me very forcibly.

I am sincerely anxious to know the truth and to live the truth. I am a Calvinist in faith, profoundly reverent in my attitude toward God, and earnestly desirous to know and to do his will, and his alone. If the views instilled into me from my infancy are in any respect erroneous, I would like to get rid of the error, but I do not wish to commit the mistake of giving up the real truth under the belief that it is not truth.

Your views are intensely fascinating, but some of them

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are so different from and opposed to what I have always believed to be Scriptural, that you can not wonder that I want more proof. Have you anything more that will throw further light on these grand themes?

Very respectfully yours, W. W. M_____.

REPLY:--We are always glad to meet and greet personally or by mail God's consecrated children. We perceive that you have the spirit of Christ, reverence and love for the truth. Your "idea" that God did not intend that anyone should know in advance when the end of the present age would come, and the Millennium be ushered in, is, we think, correct--borne out by facts. But if the Millennium began chronologically in 1874, and we are since then in the lapping time (forty years) in which the one age ends and the other as gradually begins, can it be said that any one

knew of it in advance? Should we not expect that all who are Christ's "brethren" would be made to know of the changes of dispensation now in progress which are causing the world so much perplexity? Remember the Apostle's words on this subject: "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night [stealthily, unobservedly], and when they [the world] shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child [with paroxysms of increasing severity]; and they shall not escape; but ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you [completely] as a thief. Ye are all the children of the light and of the day."--1 Thes. 5:2-6.

We have sent you samples of this Journal, as requested; and recommend a second or third careful reading of the three volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I have read with interest the article in the TOWER for Nov. 15, "Decently and in Order." Do I understand you to advise an organization as nearly as possible like that existing in the days of the Apostles? We have abundant evidence that their arrangement did not preserve the Churches in those days from error; in fact, they finally degenerated into Papacy; and it seems as though that would have been nearly impossible if there had been no "bishops," "deacons" and "elders."

Again: If elections are left to the vote of the people, will not the unfaithful soon gain the advantage and create another "system" from which we will be glad to "come out?"

If those gathered out of Babylon by present truth are all of the "wheat" class, they surely need no rules or order of any kind. If they are not all "wheat," but if some are "tares," will not the electing of elders make the companies part of Babylon, which is to be destroyed?

Yours, B. R. J_____.

[REPLY:--The article "Decently and in Order" will stand careful study, because the subject is much confused in many minds. We expressly state in that article that we do not propose an organization, because the true Church is already organized, and has been organized for over 1800 years. We proposed no preparation of a creed, because our creed was made for us (by the Lord), and we have no right to change it. We distinctly stated that in our judgment only those have a right to a voice in the Church who profess faith in the ransom and full consecration to the Lord, and whose lives are in conformity with that profession.

This simple order, if still in force, would operate as at the beginning. You will find that in any congregation the number of those who even claim such faith and consecration is very small. The difficulty which you apprehend in the following of the course of the inspired Apostles is a misapprehension. The falling away, which culminated in

Papacy, was from the opposite reason; namely, because the consecrated did not preserve their liberties by choosing their own leaders according to their understanding of the Lord's mind, but on the contrary permitted the leaders to usurp their places, authority and power, independent of them. Our only safety lies in close adherence to the instruction of the Word of God.

We have never claimed that the acceptance of the present truth proved a person to be of the "wheat" class; on the contrary, we have pointed out, repeatedly, that after receiving the light of present truth the sifting and separating, the threshing and winnowing, progresses most earnestly;--that the truth is a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. The gathering of the wheat "into the garner," from which all "tares" are excluded, is the gathering into the heavenly state as we are "changed," and pass beyond the veil.

To suppose that observing the Apostolic order, and preserving liberty by electing "elders" to serve the Church, is joining "Babylon," is to suppose that the Apostles organized "Babylon;"--a great mistake. The Babylonian method is just the reverse: it, so far as it is able, fetters the conscience of the believer with elaborate human formulae of creed, and makes the ministers (servants) a special and higher order, above the congregation, self-appointed or appointed by each other, as the case may be.

England.

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL:--I received your letter this morning. I am reading DAWN for the third time, and the only part I cannot understand is why others cannot see the truth presented therein. Sometimes, when I am reading, my heart runs over with joy. I feel like a different man from what I was four months ago. I was almost ashamed to speak of Jesus and his love, but now I cannot help speaking of it all the day long. I have purchased sixty-five copies of DAWNS, and have a large card placed in my window as

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follows: "Every seeker after the truth should read MILLENNIAL DAWN, to be had within."

Our class, of sometimes eighteen, meets on Sunday and Tuesday evenings. We are now making arrangements for a hall to hold two hundred and fifty people, which we trust to open shortly. We shall also have arrangements for baptism. We have already commenced open air meetings.

I have been appointed by the class to be responsible for all tracts and DAWNS. We have received over two thousand tracts and could do with fifty thousand more. We also propose to visit a different town every Saturday afternoon, circulating tracts, each tract stamped with my address.

Yours in Christ, W. THIRKETTLE.
