**“Latin Services” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

Latin Services .-A contributor to the Catholic Times is greatly dissatisfied with the incorrect and indistinct pronunciation of the Latin portions of the service as heard in our Roman Catholic churches. Among others things, he says:- {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 419.1}

Apparently the clergy and choir take it for granted that nobody in the congregation understands Latin, so that it does not matter in how mumbling and slovenly a manner the words are spoken. Even in such a centre of classic study as Oxford I found it quite impossible to follow the Latin prayers and hymns, although, seeing that the very object of employing this language is that worshippers of all nations may understand it, there is a special reason for enunciating it with particular distinctness. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 419.2}

The plea for accurate scholarship elsewhere made in the communication is something with which all will sympathise, but who can avoid smiling at the innocence with which the claim is indirectly made that the object of employing Latin in the Roman Catholic ritual is that “worshippers of all nations may understand.” In order that all may understand they use a tongue that not one in a hundred in the congregation can understand. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 419.3}

**“Liberty a Product of the Gospel” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

Civil liberty is a product of the Gospel. To demand complete freedom for himself is natural to every man; but to deny to all others the same liberty which he so earnestly desires for himself is just as natural. To the unregenerate man liberty means freedom from authoritative control coupled with the possession of despotic power over all other men. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 419.4}

Freedom to enslave, liberty to exercise the right of might, the gospel of force,-the possession of this only satisfies him. What freedom really is-actual liberty-is alone comprehended by the spiritual man. Before the understanding of this paradox, of freedom through subjection, can enter the mind of man, he must first have talked with God, as did Nicodemus; and, being taught of the Lord, have learned the mystery of regeneration. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 419.5}

If there have been those who unreservedly espoused the cause of civil liberty and human rights, pure and simple, and yet seemed to antagonise Christianity, it was because they unconsciously followed in the steps of Christ. They but needed some one, like another Paul to the Athenians, to preach to them the God whom they ignorantly worshipped. It was not Christianity which they antagonised but the power and authority of a false Christianity which they saw exemplified in the minds, hearts, and lives of their contemporaries. Who will say that the Athenian who knelt at the altar of the unknown god was not nearer to the kingdom of God than the Pharisee, the dust of whose city Paul had shaken from his feet? {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 419.6}

From the desire for liberty to its possession is an upward step, but this is the pinnacle. There is but one step from the possession of liberty to the desire for power; this is a downward step. Through ambition the angels fell; by it the covering cherub lost his high estate; how, then, could feeble humanity, whatever its Christian profession, expect to gain by that through which heavenly power was lost? When once the unholy lust for power has entered the heart of the church, Satanic poison has begun its work and that is a fallen church, no less than is Lucifer a fallen angel. When the fallen angel and the fallen church are animated by the same motives,-ambition for power,-they will be kindred spirits, and will work the same works. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 419.7}

Lucifer sought supreme authority, eternal in the heavens. When the spirit of worldly ambition has entered a church it seeks temporal authority supreme on earth. This is but the natural course for human weakness to take, when it has forgotten to subject itself in child-like humility to Divine leading. When the fallen church and the fallen angel have purposes which complement each other and tend to the same end, they become natural allies. But when the church forsakes its Divine Master, it subjects itself to Satan’s leadership, and becomes, with all its power and intelligence, the dupe and the tool of supernatural subtlety. The two will then work together for the same ends,-the supremacy of self, and the subjugation of all else, and will have a common purpose,-to destroy the product of the Gospel, liberty, civil and religious. When a church does this it becomes an ecclesiasticism and no longer the Church of God. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.1}

**“Silent Forces” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

How silent are the forces of nature! The earth, the planets, the sun, all the heavenly bodies swing in their rapid courses through space and make no sound. Gravity, attraction, repulsion, cohesion, the various forces which hold the worlds in their traces, all perform their labours, so infinitely gigantic, in silence. The rays of light, from sun and stars, that come to us through illimitable spaces, from distances without end, with the speed of thought, fall upon the earth more gently than the mother’s morning kiss upon her sleeping babe. Yet as the tender kiss of love may warm the heart and rouse it to great thoughts and heroic deeds of lifelong endeavour, so, light exerts upon the earth that marvellous power which causes all nature to spring into life, and develop into wondrous forms of beauty and usefulness. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.2}

All the machinery of the vast workshop of nature is set in motion, and the results are marvellous in our eyes, yet no commotion is heard. With the mind’s ear we listen delightedly to the harmonious melody of the swinging spheres, the keen, overtones of the ringing, flashing sunlight, the soft undertone of the growing things,-yet, our ear-drums give no answering vibration, and we detect no sound. All the processes of the Divine laboratory, wherein God creates, sustains, and governs worlds, produces and maintains life, and brings forth all His manifold blessings for His creatures, are carried on in a majestic grandeur of a great silence. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.3}

There was a time when Elijah, the man of God, went forty days’ journey into the wilderness and lodged in a cave on the mountain, and as he went forth and stood on the mountain a great wind went by that rent the mountain and broke the rocks in pieces; but the Lord was not in the wind; then a mighty earthquake shook the earth, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; then a rushing, devouring flame, yet the Lord was not there; but after that came a “still, small voice,” and it was the voice of God. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.4}

**“‘They That Take the Sword—’” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Army and Navy Gazette has noted the collection of loafers whose horse play, or indeed whose very presence only, gives such unpleasant prominence to the public-house corner, and suggests its own remedy. The Gazette says:- {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.5}

We have long enough submitted to the audacious bearing and conduct of tramps, cab-runners, and roughs of many varieties, all of whom ought to have been passed through a period of military training so as to be taught decency, cleanliness, and respect for their superiors. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.6}

From these premises the conclusion is reached, naturally enough, that it is surely high time for the country to recognise that military training and discipline, in their elementary forms, are quite as necessary as the three R’s.... It would therefore appear desirable to arrange in some way for the drill of all boys and young men not already serving in the army, militia, or volunteers, so that they may be prepared in due time to take their places in one or another of these three branches of our land forces. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.7}

This means that the Army and Navy Gazette wishes to see Englishmen under a similar military despotism to that which has its iron heel on the neck of every able-bodied man of all the continental nations. There is no nation on the continent of Europe in which the civil power is really of supreme influence. The actual, though perhaps at present unacknowledged, authority-the true power behind the throne or the President’s chair-is the military power. To the requirements and needs of this all else must bend. It has become a burden which the citizens of continental countries can scarce any longer endure. There, not only are years of military service compulsory upon every able-bodied man, but, in some instances, even the school-children are subjected to military drill. So burdensome has all this become that the Socialists of Germany, France, and Switzerland, are beginning to attempt some organised movement for relief. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.8}

Still, in the face of the experience of these military despotisms, there are continually to be found not a few, in countries yet free, who desire to see the power of militarism increased. Religion and the church, even, furnish the youth with military equipments and teach them army drill and tactics in those lands where the policy of the State is pacific. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.9}

It cannot be denied that within the last decade there has been an immense increase in the military spirit throughout all civilised nations, and that the present form of civilisation, and popular religion as well, gives its influence to further this, rather than otherwise. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.10}

What the logical outcome of such a situation must be within the next decade is worthy of consideration; and the adoption of measures in mitigation of the universal catastrophe is called for, rather than to add further to the destructive forces already so great. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.11}

**“Youthful Criminals” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

The statistics of crime for the last twenty years show one very suggestive fact, and that is the considerable increase in the number of youthful offenders. From one-third to one-fourth of all convictions for larceny, burglary, and crimes against morals, during the last two years, were had against youths under twenty-one years of age. There can be no doubt of the increased intelligence of the youth of the country, as the figures leave no room to doubt the increased criminality. These facts are suggestive of the eventual outcome. Youthful offenders will certainly develop into mature criminals, in the vast majority of cases, under present conditions. This clearly points to a continued growth in the criminal cases. Prophecy affirms that such will be the case until the end comes. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 420.12}

**“The Call of Abraham. The Test of Faith” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

We pass by a period of several years. The number of years we cannot tell, but Isaac, the child of faith and promise had been born, and had grown to be a young man.1 Abraham’s faith had grown stronger and more intelligent, for he had learned that God fulfills His own promises. But God is a faithful teacher, and does not allow His pupils to leave a lesson until it is thoroughly learned. It is not enough for them to see and acknowledge that they have made a mistake in the lesson that He has given them. Such acknowledgement of course ensures forgiveness; but, having seen the error, they must go over the same ground again, and possibly many times, until they have learned it so well that they can go without stumbling. It is solely for their own good. It is no kindness on the part of a parent or teacher to allow his children to pass by lessons that are unlearned, simply because they are difficult. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 421.1}

So “it came to pass after these things, that God did prove Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham; and he said, Here am I. And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” Genesis 22:1, 2. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 421.2}

In order to understand what this proving meant, we must have a clear idea of what was bound up in Isaac-of what was embraced in the promise that had been made to Abraham, which was to be fulfilled through Isaac. We have already studied it, and so have only to recall the fact. God had said to Abraham, “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed,” and, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” As we have seen, the blessing was the blessing of the Gospel, the blessing which comes through Christ and His cross. But this, since God had so said, was to be fulfilled through Isaac. The promised seed, consisting of Christ and of all who are His, was to come through Isaac. Thus we see that to human sight the requirement of God seemed like cutting off all hope of the promise ever being fulfilled. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 421.3}

But the promise was the promise of salvation through Jesus Christ, the seed. The promise had been very explicit, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called,” and that seed was first of all Christ. Therefore Christ the Saviour of all men could come only in Isaac’s line. But Isaac was yet a young man and unmarried. To cut him off would be, so men would reason, to cut off all prospects of the Messiah, and so to cut off all hope of salvation. To all appearance Abraham was called upon virtually to put the knife to his own throat, and to cut off the hope of his own salvation. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 421.4}

Thus we can see that it was not merely Abraham’s fatherly affection that was tried, but his faith in the promise of God. A severer test no man was ever called upon to undergo, for no other man ever could be in the same position. The entire hope of the whole human race was bound up in Isaac, and Abraham was asked apparently to destroy it with a stroke of the knife. Well might the one who could stand such a test be called “the father of the faithful.” We may well believe that Abraham was strongly tempted to doubt if this requirement came from the Lord; it seemed to be so directly contrary to God’s promise. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 421.5}

**TEMPTATIONS**

To be tempted, and sorely tempted, is not a sin. “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.” James 1:2. The Apostle Peter speaks of the same inheritance which was promised to Abraham, and says that we greatly rejoice in it, “though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” 1 Peter 1:6-9. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 421.6}

These temptations cause heaviness, says the apostle. They weigh one down. If it were otherwise-if it took no effort to endure them-they would not be temptations. The fact that a thing is a temptation means that it is something which appeals to all the feelings, and to endure which almost takes the very life. Therefore we may know, without casting the slightest reflection upon Abraham’s faith, that it cost him a terrible struggle to obey the command of the Lord. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 421.7}

Doubts were suggested to his mind. Doubts come from the devil, and no man is so good that he is free from the suggestions of Satan. Even the Lord Himself had to bear them. He “was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15. The sin does not consist in the devil’s whispering doubts in our ears, but in our acting upon them. This Christ did not do. Neither did Abraham; yet he who thinks that the patriarch started upon his journey without first having a sore struggle, must be unmindful not only of what was involved in the proposed test, but of the feelings of a father. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 421.8}

The tempter would suggest, “This cannot be the requirement of the Lord, because He has promised you an innumerable posterity, and has said that it must come through Isaac.” Again and again would this thought come; but it could not stand, because Abraham knew full well the voice of the Lord. He knew that the call to offer up Isaac came from the same source as the promise. The repetition of that suggestion of the tempter would only make more sure the fact that the requirement, was from the Lord. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 421.9}

But that would not end the struggle. A strong temptation to disregard the command would be found in his own affection for his son. The requirement probed that very deeply: “Take now thy son, thine only son whom thou lovest.” And there was the fond and proud mother. How could he make her believe that it was the Lord that had spoken to him? Would she not reproach him for following the fancies of a disordered mind? How could he break the matter to her? Or, if he should proceed to make the sacrifice without letting her know of it, how could he meet her on his return? Besides, there were the people. Would they not accuse him of murdering his son? We may be sure that Abraham had a desperate struggle with all these suggestions that would crowd upon his mind and heart. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 422.1}

But faith gained the victory. His time of wavering had long since passed, and now “he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.” Romans 4:20. “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” Hebrews 11:12-19. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 422.2}

The whole thing, from first to last, involved the resurrection of the dead. The birth of Isaac was really the bringing of life from the dead. It was by the power of the resurrection. Abraham had once, through harkening to his wife, failed to trust God’s power to bring him a son from the dead. He had repented of his failure, but must needs be tested upon that point, to ensure that he had thoroughly learned the lesson. The result proved that he had. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 422.3}

**THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON**

“He that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead.” Note the expression, “his only begotten son.” We cannot read it without being reminded that “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. In Abraham’s offering his only begotten son we have a figure of the offering of the only begotten Son of God. And Abraham so understood it. He had already rejoiced in Christ. He knew that through the promised Seed should come the resurrection of the dead; and it was his faith in the resurrection of the dead, which can come only through Jesus, that enabled him to stand the test. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 422.4}

Abraham offered up his only begotten son, in confidence that he would be raised from the dead because God would offer up His only begotten Son. Nay, more, God had already offered His only begotten Son, “who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world,” but who had yet to be manifested. 1 Peter 1:20. And herein we can see the marvelous faith of Abraham, and how fully it comprehended the purpose and the power of God. For the Messiah, the Seed through whom all the blessings were to come to men, was to be born of Isaac’s line. Isaac was to be cut off without an heir. Yet Abraham had such confidence in the life and power of the word of the Lord, that he believed that it would fulfill itself. He believed that the Messiah who was to come of Isaac’s line, and whose death alone could destroy death and bring the resurrection, and who had not yet come into the world, had power to raise up Isaac from the dead, in order that the promise might be fulfilled, and He be yet born into the world. Greater faith than that of Abraham could not possibly exist. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 422.5}

**THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE**

In this we see not only proof of the pre-existence of Christ but also of Abraham’s knowledge of it. Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life.” John 11:25. He was the Word that was in the beginning with God, and that was God. He was the resurrection and the life in the days of Abraham as well as in the time of Lazarus. “In Him was life,” even endless life. Abraham believed it, for he had already proved its power, and he was confident that the life of the Word would bring Isaac to life in order that the promise might be fulfilled. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 422.6}

Abraham started forth on his journey. Three days he pursued his weary way, in which there was ample time for the tempter to assail him with all manner of doubts. But doubt was fully mastered when “on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.” Genesis 22:4. Evidently some sign that the Lord had given him appeared on the mountain, and he knew beyond all doubt that the Lord was leading him. The struggle was over, and he went forward to the completion of his task, fully assured that God would bring Isaac from the dead. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 422.7}

“And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.” Verse 5. If there were not a single line in the New Testament about this matter, we might know from this verse that Abraham had faith in the resurrection. “I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.” In the original it is made very clear: We will go, and we will come again to you. The patriarch had such confidence in the Lord’s promise that he fully believed that although he should offer up Isaac as a burnt offering, his son would be raised again, so that they would both return together. “Hope maketh not ashamed.” Having been justified by faith, he had peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The trial of his faith had been patiently endured, for we must know that the bitterness of the struggle was now over, and a rich experience of the life that is in the Word had come to him, producing an unwavering hope. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 422.8}

**THE SACRIFICE COMPLETED**

We all know the outcome. Isaac carried the wood to the appointed place. The altar was built, and he was bound and laid upon it. Here still we have the likeness to the sacrifice of Christ. God gave His only begotten Son, yet the Son went not unwillingly. Christ “gave Himself for us.” So Isaac freely yielded himself as a sacrifice. He was young and strong, and could easily have resisted or fled if he had wished. But he did not. The sacrifice was his as well as his father’s. As Christ carried His own cross, so Isaac carried the wood for his own sacrifice, and meekly yielded his body to the knife. In Isaac we have a type of Christ, who was “led as a lamb to the slaughter;” Abraham’s statement, “God will provide Himself a lamb,” was but the expression of his faith in the Lamb of God. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 422.9}

“And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham; and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering instead of his son.” Genesis 22:10-13. The son’s life was spared, yet the sacrifice was as truly and as completely made as though he had been put to death. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 422.10}

**THE WORK OF FAITH**

Let us turn to read what this transaction teaches us as to the relation of faith and works. “Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God.” James 2:20-23. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 423.1}

How is it possible for anyone to suppose that here is any contradiction or modification of the doctrine of justification by faith as set forth in the writings of the Apostle Paul? All the Scriptures teach that faith works. “Faith which worketh by love” (Galatians 5:6) is declared to be the one necessary thing. The Thessalonian brethren were commended for their “work of faith.” 1 Thessalonians 1:2, 3. So the case of Abraham is used as an illustration of the working of faith. God had made a promise to him; he had believed the promise, and his faith had been counted to him for righteousness. His faith was the kind that works righteousness. Now that faith received a practical test, and the works showed that it was perfect. Thus the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness.” This work was the demonstration of the fact that faith had justly been imputed to him for righteousness. It was faith that wrought with his works. The work that Abraham did was a work of faith. His works did not produce his faith, but his faith produced his works. He was justified, not by faith and works, but by faith which works. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 423.2}

**THE FRIEND OF GOD**

“And he was called the friend of God.” Jesus said to His disciples, “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you.” Friendship between two means mutual confidence. In perfect friendship each one reveals himself to the other in a way that he does not to the outside world. There can be no perfect friendship where there is distrust and restraint. Between perfect friends there is a perfect understanding. So God called Abraham his friend, because they perfectly understood each other. This sacrifice fully revealed the character of Abraham. God had said before, “I know him;” and now again He said, “Now I know that thou fearest God.” And Abraham on his part understood the Lord. The sacrifice of his only begotten son indicated that he knew the loving character of God, who for man’s sake had already given His only begotten Son. They were united in a mutual sacrifice and a mutual sympathy. No one could appreciate the feelings of God so well as Abraham could. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 423.3}

No other person can ever be called upon to undergo the same test that Abraham endured, because the circumstances can never again be the same. Never again can the fate of the world be bound up in a single person, and hang, as it were, in the balance. Yet each child of Abraham will be tested, because only they who have the faith of Abraham are the children of Abraham. Each one may be the friend of God, and must be such if he is a child of Abraham. God will manifest Himself unto His people as He does not unto the world. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 423.4}

But we must not forget that friendship is based upon mutual confidence. If we wish the Lord to be confidential with us, we must make Him our confidant. If we confess our sins, laying out before Him in secret all our weaknesses and difficulties, then He will show Himself a faithful friend, and will reveal to us His love, and His power to deliver from temptation. He will show us how He has been tempted in the same way, suffering the same infirmities, and will show us how to overcome. Thus in loving interchange of confidences, weshall sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and may sup together. He will show to us wonderful things; for “the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant.” Psalm 25:14. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 423.5}

**“Matabeleland Savagery” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

That the savages in Matabeleland are not all black is evident from Buluwayo correspondence which appears in the papers now and then. “There will be a lot of fighting, and I fear a lot killed,” says one newspaper correspondent, “but nevertheless, any amount of sport, as shooting natives just suits this climate.” Another paper prints a letter in which the writer says, “It is grand fun potting niggers off and seeing them fall like nine-pins.” Such correspondents represent very few of the population of Matabeleland, we hope, but these little touches of savagery show how little civilisation without godliness can affect the natural barbarity of fallen human nature. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 423.6}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

-Nine-tenths of the railway passengers in England and Wales travel third-class. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.1}

-Hundreds of tons of strawberries have come into London every day during the week past. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.2}

-Spain expects to hold Cuba, her last American possession. Six cities are to present the Government with a gunboat each. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.3}

-The cholera is spreading in the provincial towns in Egypt. Since the outbreak about 15,000 deaths have been registered. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.4}

-The loss of life in Japan by the tidal wave which followed the recent earthquake is estimated at 80,000, the most disastrous event of recent years. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.5}

-Disease is spreading in the desolated parts of Armenia. One relief agent writes of the difficulty in getting doctors to go into districts where disease is taking off the people. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.6}

-The strike of factory operatives in St. Petersburg is proving a difficult thing for the authorities to deal with. The majority of the strikers have stood out stubbornly, and mills are idle. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.7}

-It is said that Li Hung Chang has given extensive orders for big guns to the great German gun-makers. Some hundreds of young Chinese are to go to Germany for military education. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.8}

-From the despatches it appears that in Crete the war between “Christian” and Moslem is like any other civil strife, both sides kill, and burning according to the rules of irregular warfare. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.9}

-Fresh disturbances occurred at Van, in Turkey, last week, in which is estimated that 400 Armenians and Turks were killed. The agitation was fostered by paid Armenian agents from abroad. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.10}

-Cablegrams from Mashonaland state that the Mashonas are joining the Matabeles, and now the whole of Rhodesia is involved in the rising. The chief Matabele prophet, or war-god, who was directing the campaign in the western country, was killed last week. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.11}

-The withered arm of the German Emperor has, it is said, been photographed by the R?ntgen rays, with the result that the character of the malformation has been made clear, and the surgeons declare it possible that a simple operation may yet give him the use of the arm. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.12}

-A national testimonial is to be presented to the islanders of Ushant and Helene in recognition of their sympathetic kindness in the treatment of the living and the dead in the asking of the Drummond Castle. The name...ant means “the terrible island,” and such it was on the night of the disaster. Several entire families perished together. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.13}

-Following in the wake of Mdlle. Couédon a small boy has appeared in France who is performing miracles of second sight, while in the State of Vermont, U.S.A., a whole corps of maraculous healers has sprung up, following the example of one Bradley Newell, an illiterate blacksmith. This man’s success has been such as to acquire an income of ten thousand pounds a year from this source alone. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 430.14}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

There are thirty Bible societies in existence; they have issued over 240,000,000 of Bibles and portions. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.1}

From the Catholic press, Anglican and Roman, it is evident that the sudden dropping of the Education Bill in no wise discourages those who demand State aid for the church schools. Their demands will increase rather than diminish. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.2}

When the Romish theologian, Dr. Eck, Luther’s adversary, told Duke William, of Bavaria, that he could refute the Reformers with the Fathers, though not with the Scriptures, the Duke replied, “I am to understand, then, that the Lutherans are within the Scriptures, and we are on the outside.” {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.3}

No one can fail to remark the revival of interest in such occult sciences, as they are called, as find their most active expression in Spiritualism and Theosophy. In Roman Catholicism also apparitions and wonders are reported from many quarters. Satan is working on the minds of men to prepare them for those “signs and wonders” by which he will work to deceive all whose names are not written in the book of life. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.4}

The English Church Union enthusiastically affirms that prayers for the dead should be restored to the regular church service. The practice is already common in many Anglican churches. Dean Lucock, at a recent E.C.U. meeting, answered the objection that such a practice had no recognition in the Bible by calling for “a single text in the whole Bible” authorising the substitution of Sunday for the seventh-day Sabbath. The two practices, prayers for the dead and Sunday observance, rest on the same foundation, Catholic tradition, which makes void the Word. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.5}

A student of statistics, writing in the Homiletic Review, calls the present “the age of murder in all Christendom.” It is so because it is the age of lawlessness generally, as the days which were before the flood. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.6}

**“Healthful Words” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

Healthful Words .-Paul frequently exhorts us to hold fast the “sound words.” Literally, it is helpful words. The words of God are full of life, and are health to the soul that feeds upon them. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.7}

**“Protestants as Persecutors” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

Protestants as Persecutors .-Last week we described the treatment meted out to Sabbath-keepers in one district in Russia, where about twenty-five had been imprisoned for two days every week for meeting on the Sabbath. A later report says:- {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.8}

The room in which they were confined is so small that they cannot lie down, and there is no opening for air, reminding one of the Black Hole of Calcutta. When they ask for air, they are told to forsake their Sabbath nonsense, and they shall have it. Part of their time is occupied in singing the songs of Zion. At first they were asked to stop this, and as they continued, rowdies gathered and stormed without; but now they sing without disturbance. This is a German colony, and the perpetrators of this shameful treatment are not Russians, but professed Protestants. Notwithstanding this trying ordeal, new members are being added to this company. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.9}

**“A Moslem Defender” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

A Moslem Defender .-In their hatred of the law of God these professed Protestants thrust Sabbath-keepers into the prisons from which Lutheranism itself has suffered in Russia in past days. Thus the descendants of Luther are denying the vital principle of the Reformation, as they are brought face to face with the truth. The report continues:- {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.10}

According to Russian law for dissenters, they have a right to meet; and now a Mohammedan lawyer has taken the case in hand, basing his action on this law. This is a striking case! Protestants so zealous in persecuting fellow Protestants that they even go beyond Russian laws, and must be called to a halt by a Mohammedan! How literally Revelation 12:17 and chapter 13 are being fulfilled all over the world! {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.11}

In concluding his report, Bro. H. P. Holser, of Switzerland, who has recently returned from Russia, says: “The outlook for the work in Russia was never better.” {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.12}

**“Why Protestants?” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

Why Protestants? -Why is it that in Russia and other countries Protestants are doing the same thing by Sunday laws that Romanists did in olden time in Europe, and in present times are now doing in some countries, by laws requiring the recognition of the ecclesiastical institutions and ceremonies? The answer is simple: They have very largely ceased to be Bible Protestants. They want Sunday kept. They are getting to know that there is no Bible authority for the day. The general public is finding out that the Sunday displaced the Sabbath of the Lord just where all the corruptions of Romanism swept into the church to displace the Gospel. In the face of all the evidence, and moved by the spirit which inevitably controls every society which refuses to follow the Word, the Protestant world has determined to enforce the Sunday observance, as far as it can, by human law. “All nations have drunk of the wine” of Rome’s corruption. So says the prophet, and we can see the evidences multiplying. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.13}

**“In America” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

In America .-There it is that we can see at its worst, just now, the manifestation of the determination to make Sunday observance compulsory-the chief mark of fallen Protestantism, as it has ever been the mark of papal authority. Nearly every mail from the States brings exchanges which publish the developments in the crusade which the American Protestant churches are carrying on in their effort to blot out the Sabbath and elevate the Sunday. The last New York Sentinel reports that when one of our brethren in Tennessee was recently sent to prison for not observing Sunday “two ministers were at the gaol to see that he was thrust into the cage, which is the inner prison.” All the denominations which we here call Nonconformists are joined in trying to secure the kind of conformity in America of which Sunday observance is the mark. When some ministers in these denominations, who see the principle of all this, cry out against it, they are silenced by the voices of the thoughtless majority. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.14}

**“What to Do” The Present Truth, 12, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

What to Do .-What is to be done to meet this propaganda of force which is gathering in all Christendom? “Preach the Word.” That is the only thing. The Word and the law of God will stand with all the power of the world opposed to them. To those who desire to stand upon the Word God gives this assurance: “Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath, for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but My salvation shall be for ever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished. Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.” “Fear God, and give glory to Him,” is the Gospel message now to all. {PTUK July 2, 1896, p. 432.15}

**“A Long Sermon” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.” {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 433.1}

A Long Sermon .-When Cain killed Abel because his own works and worship were evil and his brother’s according to the direction of the Lord, he doubtless thought he had silenced Abel’s testimony for truth. But Abel “yet speaketh.” For six thousand years Abel has been testifying to the world that it is good to follow the Lord. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 433.2}

The Work of Faith .-The life of righteousness and the work of faith and the labour of love never cease to bear fruit so long as the world stands and there are sinners who can be saved, and souls to be encouraged. Every life not lived to itself starts a circle of influence for good that continues to widen until it touches the shores of eternity. Abel’s gift of the firstlings of his flock was a small one, but God still testifies to the love and the faith which prompted it. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 433.3}

A Successful Life .-Abel was so young, and his life was so suddenly cut short that it might appear at first thought that he had accomplished little in the world, notwithstanding his faithfulness. But God, who does not measure the influence of men’s lives according to the world’s standards, has made Abel’s simple life a blessing and encouragement and a sermon to millions. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 433.4}

**“The Call of Abraham. The Promise and the Oath” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

The sacrifice had been made; Abraham’s faith had been tested and found perfect; “And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply1 thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of His enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice.” Genesis 22:15-18. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 433.5}

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we learn the significance of the fact that God swore by Himself. The reader will at once see that the following Scripture has direct reference to that which has just been quoted:- {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 433.6}

“When God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swear by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” Hebrews 6:13-20. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 433.7}

The oath was not for Abraham’s sake. His belief in God was complete without the oath to back the promise. His faith had been shown to be perfect, before the oath was given. Moreover, if it had been given for his sake, there would have been no necessity of putting it on record, since he was dead long before the record was written. But God was willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, and so He confirmed the promise by an oath. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 433.8}

**IN CHRIST ALONE**

And who are heirs of the promise?-The next clause tells us. The oath was in order that “we might have a strong consolation.” The oath was given for our sakes. This shows that the covenant with Abraham concerns us. Those who are Christ’s are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise; and this oath was given to be an encouragement to us when we flee for refuge to Christ. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 434.1}

How plainly this last reference shows us that the whole of the covenant with Abraham, with all of its included promises, is purely Gospel. The oath backs the promise; but the oath gives consolation to us when fleeing for refuge to Christ; therefore the promise has reference to that which is to be gained in Christ. This is also shown in the text which has so often been repeated, “If ye are Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” The promise had nothing else in view but Christ and the blessings which are bestowed through His cross. Thus it was that the Apostle Paul, whose determination was to know nothing but “Jesus Christ and Him crucified,” could also say that he stood and was judged “for the hope of the promise made of God unto the fathers.” Acts 26:6. The “hope of the promise made of God unto the fathers,” is “the hope set before us” in Christ, and which is made “more abundantly” sure by the oath of God to Abraham. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 434.2}

The oath of God confirmed the covenant. The oath by which the promise was confirmed gives us strong consolation when we flee for refuge to the sanctuary where Christ is priest in our behalf, after the order of Melchizedek. Therefore that oath was the same as the oath that made Christ priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. This is clearly set forth in the statement that Christ was made priest “with an oath by Him that said unto Him, The Lord sware, and will not repent. Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek” (Hebrews 7:21), and that He is able therefore to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 434.3}

Still further, The oath by which Christ was made priest after the order of Melchizedek was the oath by which He is made surety of a “better covenant,” (verse 22) even the new covenant. But the oath by which Jesus was made priest after the order of Melchizedek was the same as the oath by which the covenant with Abraham was confirmed. Therefore the covenant with Abraham is identical in its scope with the new covenant. There is nothing in the new covenant that is not in the covenant with Abraham; and no one will ever be included in the new covenant, who is not a child of Abraham through the covenant made with him. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 434.4}

What wonderful consolation is lost by those who fail to see the Gospel and the Gospel only in the promise of God to Abraham. The “strong consolation” which the oath of God gives us, is in Christ’s work as “a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” As a priest He presents His blood, through which we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. As a priest He not only provides mercy for us, but “grace to help in time of need.” This is assured to us “without respect of persons,” by the oath of God. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 434.5}

**“STRONG CONSOLATION”**

Here is a poor, timid, trembling soul, cast down and despondent by a sense of sins committed, and of general weakness and unworthiness. He is afraid that God will not accept him. He thinks that he is too insignificant for God to notice, and that it would make no difference to anybody, not even to God, if he were lost. To such the Lord says, “Hearken to Me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord; look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and to Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone [when he was but one, R.V.], and blessed him, and increased him. For the Lord shall comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.” Isaiah 51:1-3. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 434.6}

Look to Abraham, brought up a heathen, and see what God did for him and what He promised to him, confirming it with an oath by Himself, for your sake. You think that it would make no difference with the Lord if you were lost, because you are so obscure and insignificant. Why, your worthiness or unworthiness has nothing whatever to do with the matter. The Lord says, “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” Isaiah 43:25. For His own sake? Yes, certainly; because of His great love wherewith He loved us, He has placed Himself under bonds to do it. He swore by Himself to save all that come to Him through Jesus Christ, and “He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself.” 2 Timothy 2:13. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 434.7}

Think of it; God swore by Himself! That is, He pledged Himself, and His own existence, to our salvation in Jesus Christ. He put Himself in pawn. His life for ours, if we are lost while trusting Him. His honour is at stake. It is not a question of whether or not you are insignificant and of little or no worth. He Himself says that we are “less than nothing.” Isaiah 40:17. He says that “we have sold ourselves for naught,” (Isaiah 52:3), which shows our true value; but we are redeemed without money, even by the precious blood of Christ. The blood of Christ is the life of Christ; and the life of Christ bestowed upon us makes us partakers of His worth. The only question is, Can God afford to break or forget His oath? And the answer is that we have “two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie.” {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 434.8}

Think of what would be involved in the breaking of that promise and that oath. The word of God, which brings the promise, is the word which created the heavens and the earth, and which upholds them. “Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number; He calleth them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed away from my God?” Isaiah 40:25-27. The preceding part of this same chapter speaks of the word of God, which has created all things, and that it shall stand for ever, and the words are quoted by the Apostle Peter, with the additional statement, “And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.” 1 Peter 1:25. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 434.9}

It is the word of God in Christ that upholds the universe, and keeps the innumerable stars in their places. “In Him all things consist.” If He should fail, the universe would collapse. But God is no more sure than His word, for His word is backed by His oath. He has pledged His own existence to the performance of His word. If His word should be broken to the humblest soul in the world, He Himself would be disgraced, dishonoured, and dethroned. The universe would go to chaos and annihilation. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 434.10}

Thus the entire universe is in the balance to ensure the salvation of every soul that seeks it in Christ. The power manifested in it is the power pledged to the help of the weak. So long as matter exists, so long will the word of God be sure. “For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven.” Psalm 119:89. It would be a sad loss to you if you should fail of salvation; but it would be a far greater loss to the Lord if you should fail through any fault of His. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.1}

Then let the aforetime doubting soul sing:- {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.2}

*“His oath, His covenant, His blood,
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.” {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.3}*

**“Roman Catholic Growth” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

According to a recent writer in the English Churchman, Roman Catholic statisticians themselves vary as to the number of Roman Catholics in the world from 195,000,000 to 250,000,000,-making a small discrepancy between their own figures of 55,000,000. This fact is used to show that no reliance can be put upon their own estimates. This writer then brings forward his own figures which show that there were in 1893, throughout the world 208,000,000 of Roman Catholics. He then says, “No one save a bigoted and uninformed Roman Catholic will deny that Romanism is not making any headway.” {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.4}

To substantiate this he brings the statement of Mr. Gladstone in his pamphlet “The Vatican Decrees” in an article in the Contemporary Review for October, 1878. In this Mr. Gladstone shows, by a comparison of the marriage statistics, that the proportion of Roman Catholics to the entire population, in Great Britain, between the years 1854 and 1878, had decreased about one-half of one per cent. It will be seen that this will allow for a large numerical increase in the Roman Catholic denomination, and still permit the slight decrease in proportion to the whole population which the marriage statistics show. In fact, in view of the rapid increase in population and other conditions, it would seem that these figures were very favourable for the Roman Catholic denomination. If the comparative statistics of the last twenty years were at hand, there is but little doubt but that they would be still more favourable. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.5}

But these this writer does not give. He does say, however, that the “Statesman’s Year-Book” gives the number of Catholics in 1893 in England and Wales as 1,135,400. In 1851 their number, calculated upon the basis of the marriage returns, was 758,800, but at the same time the number of their places of worship, and their wealth, has increased in far greater proportion, and the number of their priests and religious orders has also multiplied greatly. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.6}

This writer then repeats certain statements made in Catholic papers in the United States in 1836 and 1874 to show that Roman Catholicism is waning in the United States. These articles are merely a collection of extravagant figures and statements as to what the Roman Catholic Church in America might have been had none of its members ever neglected their church relationship, and all their children, comprising the entire number of the natural increase, been added to the church in their turn. Such an imaginary possibility as that for the growth of the religious denomination is of course entirely Quixotic. And yet the number of Roman Catholics in the United States at present is variously estimated from six to twelve millions. However, the strength of the Roman Catholic power is not to be estimated by statistics so much as by the political evidences of its influence which are now abroad in every land, and, in this country, the present willingness, if not desire, of the Anglican Church to affiliate with Rome if it could but do so upon its own terms. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.7}

**“Spoken to You” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Bible is the language of the Spirit of God spoken through men. The Spirit of God, who knows the human heart and its needs, as well as the Divine gifts, has put language into the mouths of certain men, which may be used by all. So when we read the words of David, “Bless the Lord, O my soul,...who forgiveth all thine iniquities” (Psalm 103:1-3), we are to appropriate that language as our own. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.8}

We may indeed believe that God spoke to and blessed David and Paul; but if we do not make that language and blessing our own, we do not really believe the Word, for it is addressed to us. If you wish to know if you really believe the whole Bible, you may test yourselves by this text:- {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.9}

“I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.10}

If you read this merely as Paul’s experience, then you have not learned to believe the Bible. But if in reading it you can speak that word “I” as meaning yourself, and can repeat the text intelligently as the language of your own heart, as the Spirit of God meant you should, then you really believe not that verse alone, but the whole Bible, and the joy of God’s salvation is yours. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.11}

**“Increase of Organised Murder” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

The reported discoveries in connection with a murder lately committed in Paris are startlingly suggestive of the systematic development of method in the perpetration of crimes of violence. It is said that the police have learned of the existence in Paris of a company of young men, organised for the purposes of crime. It is believed that not less than twenty-five had personal knowledge of this particular murder, in which the victim was an aged and titled woman of wealth. In this company of criminals are a number of young men belonging to respectable families of some position. All claim to be students and live in the Latin quarter, holding frequent gatherings for the purpose of planning their crimes. Murder is openly advocated in these meetings, and planned for by them as but an incident necessary to the successful prosecution of their crimes. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.12}

It is not long since a similar murder was committed in Brussels, the victim being also an old and wealthy woman. In this case it was found that the instigator of the crime was a person high in police authority, who was using his knowledge and experience, gained in long service, to carry out a series of such robberies and murders, and, by means of his official position, conceal and screen the actual perpetrators, sharing with them the proceeds. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.13}

Four murderers have just been executed in London, the story of whose deeds are familiar to readers of the daily papers. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.14}

These are but samples of the individual deeds of cold-blooded slaughter, among those which come to the light, in which we call civilised countries. But consider the wholesale slaughter which is taking place at the same time in Cuba, in South Africa, in Egypt, in Crete, in Armenia. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 435.15}

To remedy these conditions, or to do away with them, is not within the power of man. The tares will grow until the harvest, and just as long as the tares and the wheat are together the tares will strive with one another and crowd and choke the wheat. From this there is no escape until the end. The noble work of arbitration committees and peace societies will have their beneficent effect here and there, but it is not reasonable to look to them for any appreciable amelioration of the evil days which have come upon us,-for the continuance of which, until the Prince of Peace Himself shall come, we have the sure word of prophecy. But it remains for us to “follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” Hebrews 12:14. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.1}

**“An Apology for Sunday Laws” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Christian has recently done the Sabbath truth a distinct service by exhibiting the hopeless confusion of ideas that prevails amongst those who defend the substitution of Sunday for the Sabbath. The editor recently visited South Africa, and in letters home showed considerable concern at the growth of the work of Sabbath reform in Cape Colony. His criticism of those who, in fighting the Sabbath, resort to a denial of any Sabbath obligation whatever, brought a reply from a Baptist minister of Cape Town, printed in the Christian of June 18. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.2}

**NO BIBLE FOR SUNDAY OBSERVANCE**

This reply is interesting, as it chose the grounds on which Baptists-who have been historically against religious legislation-are ready to base Sunday laws. He first shows how necessary it is to take the no-Sabbath position if one is not to keep the Sabbath of the Lord. He says to the editor:- {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.3}

The only passage you quote of general import is, “The Sabbath was made for man; not man for the Sabbath.” That passage surely cannot contradict all the passages in the Old Testament, which distinctly state that it was given to the children of Israel as a sign to separate them from the other nations, and as a memorial of their deliverance from Egypt. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.4}

We hardly need remark, in passing to the argument for Sunday laws, that, so far from there being many passages which “distinctly state” that the Sabbath was given as a sign to the children of Israel “to separate them from other nations,” there is not one which does so. It is distinctly and repeatedly stated that it is a sign between God and His people. “Between Me and you”-not between them and other nations. Nor is it anywhere said to be a memorial of the deliverance from Egypt. God asked them to keep His Sabbath, as He asked them to do justice and judgment, and to keep all His laws because He had delivered them from bondage. The event of which the Sabbath is a memorial is named in the commandment itself-the creation. It is “the Sabbath of the Lord thy God”-not the Sabbath of the Jews; and when God becomes our God, and the observance of His Sabbath becomes the sign that we accept Him as such. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.5}

Proceeding, the correspondent shows why he is forced to take the current no-law position:- {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.6}

Now, the Sabbatarian says: “You believe that Sunday is the Sabbath? Show me in the Bible where the day was changed? Show me where we are commanded to keep the first day instead of the seventh? Show me where the seventh day law is binding on the first day of the week?” And you can show him none of these things. If the Sabbath remains, it must be kept according to instructions. There is nothing in the Bible about a change of day. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.7}

**THE “CIVIL” ARGUMENT**

Yet while confessing that there is nothing in the Bible about a change of day, the usual familiar references are made to the disciples meeting on the first day, although the Scriptures show that they attached no significance whatever to the day. “The example of the early church bids us observe it,” says the writer-an argument that places him distinctly upon the Catholic ground, and it is not surprising that he then passes on to justify the enforcement of Sunday laws on the very principles by which Romanism has justified the enforcement of this, and other of her ecclesiastical institutions, from the days of the apostasy down. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.8}

To those who recognise themselves as the Lord’s, no Act of Parliament is needed to enforce the observance of the State. Those who do not yield themselves to the Lord, we have no right to enforce, on religious grounds, to observe what is essentially a religious day. We cannot extract religious observance by Act of Parliament. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.9}

Sunday is “essentially a religious day,” and it is to be enforced-but not on religious grounds; for that would be religious persecution, a phrase which has a bad sound. But on whatever ground it is alleged to be enforced, the fact remains that it “is essentially a religious day.” So that the man who is compelled to recognise it is compelled to recognise a religious institution. What difference, then, does it make to the man who conscientiously objects to recognising the day on what grounds it is sought to be enforced? If one were commanded to fall down and worship an idol what difference would it make to him whether the man with the sword asked to do so on the ground that it was good for his health, or his civic duty, or whether he came out frankly and commanded him to recognise idol worship? The act sought to be enforced is the thing, the compulsory recognition of “what is essentially a religious day,” and when the churches of the day joined in pressing Governments into the enforcement of Sunday laws they are repeating the history of Rome. And this is how they are to ask for the enforcement of “a religious day” and preserve the Protestant profession:- {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.10}

We do not go as Christians to Government and ask it to help us to observe the day that we freely grant should be observed by us, and which we esteem it a privilege to observe; neither do we ask Government to persuade men by force to observe a day, whom by religious arguments we cannot persuade to observe it. But we go as citizens, taking common ground with the rest of our fellow-men, to ask that in the interests of the community there may be a weekly respite from work. If we ask for legislation on religious grounds we have granted the principle of the right of the State to legislate on religious matters, a principle which we are not inclined to grant. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.11}

But even here Rome has forestalled Protestants in the use of this argument-which is not new with our Baptist friends, but may be taken as representing the plea on which Protestants in all lands are urging forward Sunday legislation. Long ago Rome invented this theory of dual personality and responsibility. The Church of Rome never persecuted, say they; they merely turned over the offender to “the secular arm.” The Church secured the laws, the clergy decided what was dangerous to the body politic, and “as citizens” may even have helped the “secular arm” execute the penalty, but it was not the Church which did these awful deeds! {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.12}

The whole thing is transparent. What difference does it make to a man if I am seeking to compel him under penalties to recognise an “essentially religious” institution, in which he does not believe, if I tell him it is not as a Christian but as a citizen that I am punishing him? Our Baptist friends, above all peoples, ought to understand these principles. “The Anabaptists,” says the historian, “were the first of Protestant sects to feel that even the reformed churches could rival the intolerance of Rome.” Amongst the first victims burned in Smithfield were Baptists, and all through the later struggles in the sad history of intolerance Baptists knew what it was to suffer for the truth, charged with violating laws established for the good order of the commonwealth. “In the interests of the community” has always been the cry in the enforcement of religious institutions. Here is a dialogue which Neal gives in his history of Puritanism, which illustrates the principle. One White, before the Lord Chief Justice, objected to being forced to attend worship in which he believed it idolatry to take part. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 436.13}

Master of the Rolls.-These are no part of idolatry, but are commanded by the prince for civil order, and if you will not be ordered you show yourself disobedient to the laws. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.1}

White.-I would not willingly disobey any law, only I would avoid those things that are not warranted by the Word of God. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.2}

Master of Requests.-These things are commanded by Act of Parliament, and in disobeying the laws of your country you disobey God. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.3}

That was the controversy, over and over again, centuries ago. Apply the same principles to Sunday laws, and it is readily seen why it is that Sabbath-keepers cannot be forced to pay regard to the Sunday, which stands as the mark of Rome’s assumed authority. One of the latest utterances on the subject by a prince of that Church, Cardinal Gibbons, is to the effect,- {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.4}

Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act. It could not have been otherwise, as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical and religious without her. And the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.5}

Now Sabbath-keepers do not acknowledge that authority, nor can they acknowledge the mark which that power has set up as a rival to the Sabbath, the sign or mark of allegiance to God. The closing message of Revelation 14:6-12 is God’s warning against the recognition of this mark of Rome’s authority, and God’s call to men to rally round “the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.6}

The theory that men can do “as citizens” what would be wrong to do “as Christians” is a thoroughly bad one, responsible for much wickedness and other things than religious legislation. When God judges the man, according to his holy law, where will the citizen be? “Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” is the command of the Lord. Whatever is to the glory of God men can do as Christians, and when they want to do something which they cannot do as Christians, we may assure them it is an un-Christian thing. Sunday laws are distinctly anti-Christian, and their history runs parallel with that of a persecuting Church from Constantine’s day down. No juggling with names and phrases can alter their nature. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.7}

We appeal to all who know the nature of spiritual ordinances and worship against the employment of carnal force in religious matters. And we appeal, in the name of the Lord, and by his Holy Word, to all who range themselves on the side of God’s law and the Divine government at this time when the principles of the Papacy are leading on to the formation of the very image of the Papacy in lands which have been called Protestant. The Word is the guide, and the Word is the power, and the Word will stand. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.8}

**“Formosan Idolatry” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

Formosan Idolatry .-A traveller who writes of Formosa says of the religious life of the people:- {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.9}

Many of the Chinese, especially the women, are devout worshippers; many others are sceptical, and the majority are careless. Idolatry has a powerful hold on their minds, but it is only when reverses and troubles come that the average man will resort to the temple. They believe the gods have power to help or to injure them, but so long as things go well they are careless about their devotions. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.10}

Human nature is alike the world over. Many in more enlightened lands reserve their thoughts of God merely for accidents and emergencies, having no more idea of spiritual worship than the idolatrous Formosan. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.11}

**“Rome’s Position Restated” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Pope’s new encyclical on the unity of the church has appeared. It is addressed to the dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church by their different titles, and deals with the question of the attitude of the Catholic Church towards those who reject any of its doctrines. The position taken is uncompromising. It holds that the Roman Catholic Apostolate is commanded “to the end of time to teach and rule the nations,”-and that Christ “ordered the nations to accept their teaching and obey their authority,” as the successors of Himself and His apostles. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.12}

This is definite, and leaves no room for any negotiations as to the validity of Anglican orders except through the acknowledgement of complete and unquestioned Roman Catholic supremacy. That there need be no room for doubt left as to the absolute completeness of the surrender required, these words are used: “There can be nothing more dangerous than those heretics who admit nearly the whole cycle of doctrine, and yet by one word, as with a drop of poison, infect the real and simple faith,” etc. The idea which the encyclical enforces is the divine right of the Papacy to rule the world and the religious duty which the world is under to subject itself unreservedly to its authority. The soul of Leo longs for unity but only on the basis of papal supremacy by divine right. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.13}

**“Religious Animosity in Political Life” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

The American correspondent of the London Baptist Freeman expresses the hope that the coming presidential campaign in the United States may be free from religious controversy. Such a suggestion, even, has a very sinister sound. It shows that such a thing as the mingling of bitter religious controversy with American political strife is not only possible but probable. This writer thinks, however, that trouble is likely to come only from the American Protective Association, which is a secret organisation aiming to boycott the Romanists as enemies to national life. With the Democrats they will have no chance, but the Republicans will need to go carefully, especially as a new order has been started for self-protection by the Roman Catholics. No candidate for the Presidency who will not assure them that he has given no promise of support to the A.P.A. will stand any chance of votes from this body. There is no concealing the fact that if organised for political purposes the Romanists would control the situation. They constitute about a third of the religious communicants of the country, and number as many as the combined strength of the Baptists and Methodists, the principal Protestant denominations. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.14}

The matter-of-fact way in which this is stated shows how thoroughly the public mind in the United States is becoming accustomed to the idea of political religion, and how largely religious prejudices and animosities are already beginning to make their influence felt in political life. It is true that which makes itself most apparent is the antagonism between this organisation, which calls itself the American Protective Association, and the Roman Catholics, but it is not here that the real danger lies. It is far deeper than this. Where the root of the actual danger is may be seen from the fact that Mr. McKinley, the Republican nominee for the Presidency, was approached, previous to his nomination, by certain representatives of so-called orthodox religious views, and sounded as to his position upon the enforcement of such religious laws as are already on the statute books. It is claimed by them that he gave to them his unqualified assent. This fact is already used among the churches in Mr. McKinley’s favour politically. These things, together with the condition mentioned in the extracts quoted, shows a complete revolution already taking place in religious and political affairs in the United States. That separation between religion and the State, which has been proclaimed the pride and glory of the American governmental system, is to be thrown aside, indeed is already ignored, and religious prejudice and ignorant zeal is to be made a part of political wire-pulling, trickery, and chicanery. The untoward results of such a change as this cannot fail to make themselves quickly apparent. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 437.15}

**“A Swiss School” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

In Switzerland the school laws are very strict, and in some of the cantons administered with a consideration for those upon whom they may work a hardship. Attendance is required at school for six days in the week, without any exemption for Seventh-day observers. These people have suffered fine and imprisonment, in one case even several days close confinement on bread and water, for refusing to send their children to school on the Sabbath. Every means was tried to satisfy the school authorities, by extra work during the week and paying the teacher for the overtime given to the children that they might be excused from the exercises on the Sabbath, but without avail. The school authorities vetoed all that was tried and that could be done, and finally stated positively that the school programme as laid down must be implicitly followed. This of course necessitated the establishment of a school of their own. This was done last autumn, and their first school year has just closed with a very successful record. The accompanying cut shows the main edifice, but fails to do justice to the picturesque surroundings, or to show the accompanying buildings which go to make up the facilities of the school. The chateau occupied by the school, and which the Seventh-day Adventists have purchased, is situated in a commanding position overlooking the valley which runs down to the lake of Bienne, and has in connection with it park, meadows, and orchard, of about twenty-four acres. In the rear of the building and its park are the government forests and the Juras rising precipitously several thousand feet. Certainly the buildings and the location are most admirable, and it is an exceedingly satisfactory thing to see that success has been attained the first year. About thirty pupils have been in attendance this first term and nearly if not quite double that number will seek admission the coming year. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 438.1}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

-Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, famed as the author of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” died on July 1, aged 85. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.1}

-Great rains in India have resulted in many landslips which have occasioned very serious damage to property and some loss of life. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.2}

-For the second time the Anglesey Quarter Sessions has had a blank calendar. A similar condition characterised last summer’s assizes. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.3}

-Within the past few weeks very serious hail storms have occurred in Southern Russia; children have been killed and cattle injured by the hail-stones. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.4}

-As many as thirty journals are written, printed, and published in American prisons, by the inmates. One, the Ohio Penitentiary News, has a circulation of 2,500. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.5}

-Preparations are being made to send 40,000 men from Spain to Cuba for the prosecution of the Cuban war. Twenty steamers will be used in the transportation of the troops. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.6}

-The Queen of Portugal, the most beautiful crowned head in Europe, has taken Rontged photographs of the waist of her Court ladies to demonstrate the evils of tight lacing. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.7}

-Following the loss of the Cape liner a few weeks ago, two other steamers have just been lost. One in the Red Sea went down with sixty souls, and a Japanese steamer sunk with 178 on board. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.8}

-An American publisher has brought out a Bible for the coloured people in which all the angels are represented as negroes. The coloured people are buying up the Bibles as fast as they can get them. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.9}

-In 1874 the exports of British and Irish produce to the British possessions were, exclusive of India, worth ?48,000,000. They ran up to ?52,000,000 in 1889, but in 1894 they had fallen to 244,000,000. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.10}

-It is said that a physician has collected the details of over seven hundred eases of burial while in a condition of trance or catalepsy. The same physician has written a book contemning suggestions for the prevention of such tragedies. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.11}

-An orange-coloured shirt has been strongly recommended for tropical wear by a Royal Engineer in India, who declares that he fell frequently ill after duty in the sun until he treated himself as a photographic sensitive plate and surrounded his body with yellow light. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.12}

-Hot water is to be supplied in the streets of Liverpool on the penny-in-the-slot principle at a halfpenny a gallon. The heating agency is fitted to a street lamp. When a halfpenny is passed in a flash-jet lights the lamp, and the water in a copper coil is instantly heated to 194 degrees. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.13}

-A telegram from Shanghai states that disorders continue to prevail in different parts of the Chinese empire, and that the Mussulman insurrection is the Kansu province is assuming more and more grave proportions, while the secret societies are again exciting the people against Europeans. Famine and the plague are raging in the southern provinces. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 446.14}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

During the thirty years of his work for the children, Dr. Barnardo’s Homes have received from 30,000 to 40,000 waifs from the streets and desolated homes. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.1}

The question of Sunday rest for the Paris Exhibition of 1900 has been before the French Government, with the result that the authorities have refused to name Sunday as a day of compulsory rest. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.2}

Complaint is often made of the increase of the School Board rate for London. But the amount spent on schools is trifling compared with London’s drink bill. The schools cost about two and a half millions yearly, while the amount spent for drink is twenty millions. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.3}

Our friends who are engaged in medical missionary work in Samoa find so much to do that increased facilities are necessary to care for those who ask help. A site has been purchased for a sanatorium, the work on which is already under way, we understand. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.4}

An old soldier, who is now a Christian, said to the writer a few days ago, that the chaplain in the army made him an infidel. The spectacle of a man professing to represent the religion of Jesus Christ actively participating in, and encouraging war is enough to make infidels of those soldiers who have any perception of the difference between spiritual and carnal things. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.5}

Speaking of the thousands of troops everwhere about Moscow, guarding the Czar and others during the coronation, the superintendent of our Society’s work in Russia writes:- {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.6}

Laws of iron may conquer the world, but it is only where the gentle Spirit of God conquers the heart and plants the law of love, that none need to fear. We are glad of the blessed hope, and that soon will take place the coronation of Him who alone is worthy to rule the world, and whose kingdom is one of everlasting peace and righteousness. May it soon come! {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.7}

Contrasting military with missionary methods of dealing with uncultured tribes the Christian World says: “As pioneer in a world then unknown, David Livingstone set as a splendid, an heroic, an apostolic, a Christ-like example. Trusting solely to the fascination exercised over humanity, even its lowest social phases, by a true reflection of the image of Christ, not in word only but in life, he ranged from shore to shore of the Dark Continent, solitary but supreme by the grace of God.” {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.8}

One of the objects of the Theosophical Society, as stated in a meeting lately held in New York City, is “to discover the psychic powers latent in man.” {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.9}

For the purpose of such a discovery how would it do to undertake a thorough study of the Bible? All earnest investigators should desire facts rather than theories. The Bible contains the only perfectly reliable record of these facts. This textbook is no doubt within reach of all these Theosophists. Let them hasten, then, to avail themselves of the information it contains. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.10}

The name does not determine the character of anything, nor does a change of name change the nature. If, therefore, the only thing preventing corporate reunion between Rome and the larger body of the Church of England clergy is the recognition of Anglican “orders,” it is evident that, so far as doctrine is concerned, there is practical agreement. The other is only a technical question, which would be no practical barrier whatever if it were not for State establishment. However it turns now, we may expect to have the Roman faith taught in the future as it has been in the past, in thousands of Church of England pulpits. What it is called makes no difference. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.11}

The statistics of crime in Germany develop a very surprising fact, namely, that there is one-fifth less crime in proportion to population among the Jews than among the people of Germany at large: and also that as crime increases with increasing population the increment is three times greater among the people at large than in the Jewish section. Such facts as these should cause the Jew-baiter to stop and think. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.12}

Dr. Cheyne, the late Physician-General of the Death Rate, once made the following statement: “The information of twenty years has convinced me that were ten young men on their twenty-first birthday to begin to drink one glass (equal to two ounces) of ardent spirits or a pint of port wine or sherry, and were they to drink this supposed moderate quantity of strong liquor daily, the lives of eight out of ten would be abridged by twelve or fifteen years.” {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.13}

Dr. Laffin, a West African missionary, says that in Central Africa, during the last twenty-five years, 250,000 people have been taught to read the Bible in their own tongues, and that not “a missionary, with tact and discretion, and a knowledge of the people, can, if unarmed, travel almost anywhere he chooses, preaching the Gospel as he goes.” His most dangerous ground is in the track of armed explorers and traders who are “opening” Africa to civilisation. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.14}

**“What It Means” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

What It Means .-The Chronicle, in commenting editorially upon the Pope’s latest encyclical, says:- {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.15}

What the Encyclical does mean is that the Anglicans now have fair warning of the terms on which absolute reunion, including common orders, common faith, common jurisdiction, can proceed. Reunion is simply another word for absorption in Rome. Those Anglicans therefore who are prepared, as we imagine some of them are prepared, to accept these terms, will not be deterred by the Pope’s Encyclical. Nay, their action might even be hastened by it. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.16}

It remains to be seen what course those will now take who have interested themselves in this movement. However, it will be clear that all those who continue to agitate and favour it, are intelligently and intentionally working in the interest of the Roman Catholic Church, and with a view to merging the English Church with that body. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.17}

**“‘The Spirit Itself Maketh Intercession’” The Present Truth, 12, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

“The Spirit Itself Maketh Intercession.” -It may well send conviction to men’s hearts to know that God searches the heart and knows every secret there. But God tells us this in order to encourage us-not to discourage, or to keep us away from Him. “The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints.” Romans 8:26, 27. God searches the heart only that sin may be discovered to us and put away, and the Holy Spirit follows the conviction of the sin by the Divine comfort of intercession in behalf of the sinner. It is a blessed thing that God knoweth the hearts. {PTUK July 9, 1896, p. 448.18}

**“Job’s Patience” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job.” {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 449.1}

Yes; we all have heard of it. Job’s patience has been proverbial for thirty centuries or more. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 449.2}

But we have heard of something else also. Indeed, we never should have heard of Job’s patience if we had not heard of Job’s trials. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 449.3}

Many who wish they had Job’s patience forget how he got it. “Tribulation worketh patience.” Romans 5:3. When we pray for patience, let us remember what it is that works this Divine grace, and then we shall not be surprised if in answer to the prayer the trial comes which is to develop the grace in our souls. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 449.4}

Some are very apt to talk as though they would be examples of marvellous patience if it were not for the trials they have to endure. It is the trial that makes them hasty of temper and impatient. What a misreading of human experience! It is the trial that works the patience. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 449.5}

In the life of Jesus we have the Divine example of patience-the highest degree of patience brought out by the sorest trials that humanity ever bore. We are exhorted to “consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” It is only by considering His patience that we can be patient. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 449.6}

It is important to remember this: that, as all the faith that we have is of Him—“the faith of Jesus,”—so all patience is His. And as His patience comes only by tribulation, it necessarily follows that He bears the trial every time one of His children is called upon to pass through tribulation. The suffering works that sweet grace of patience because Jesus Himself shares in the suffering, bears the infirmity, and His all-sufficient grace bestows upon the tried one His own patience. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 449.7}

Knowing this, we can heartily and joyfully “glory in tribulations also.” We know then that they are not against us, but for us; that in this experience God is giving us patience, and Jesus is proving His fellowship with us in suffering. When Job suffered affliction, it was just as true that Jesus suffered with him and strengthened him to patiently endure, as it was that when Israel suffered in the wilderness, “In all their affliction He was afflicted.” Those who hastily conclude that God suffered affliction to come to Job, and harshly left him to bare it alone, fail to see “the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” James 5:11. Job saw the end that the Lord had in view, and preserved his integrity, and received the gift of the patience of which all have heard. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 449.8}

**“Four Hundred and Ninety Times!” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

Peter came to the Lord and said: “How oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times?” And Christ’s answer was-“Until seventy times seven,” four hundred and ninety times. Peter asked this because he had in mind what Christ had just said in reference to the adjustment of differences between the brethren. The arbitration which the Lord then advised is the only proceedings at court to which the Lord ever gave His direct sanction. When this course is followed, and His advice taken throughout, He may be called upon to act as counsel. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 449.9}

But mark how different the whole affair is from a common proceeding at law. First it is necessary for the complainant to go alone to the one that has wronged him and with a kindly persuasion attempt to win him to do that which is right, that, if possible, he may gain his case without any publicity as to the facts whatever, and at the same time gain a friend and brother instead of making an enemy. But if this should not succeed, even then he is not to be summoned to appear and defend himself against the accusations made. No, the complainant with his one or two witnesses must go to find the culprit, and there, in such seclusion and privacy as he may desire, propose to hold their court of arbitration. The appeal is to the culprit-not to the court. But if this proves useless, then, and not till then, the matter is to be made public and the congregation informed. Then if he will not listen to this third and public appeal for a settlement,-what then? Take the matter to the civil or criminal court? No, “let him be”! {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 450.1}

Remember this was not in the absence of a system of judicial procedure. Law courts were in existence, and their methods well developed. But Christ counselled no recourse to them. It was with this in his mind that Peter asked if he should forgive seven times,-and Christ answered, Four hundred and ninety times! {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 450.2}

**“Showing Their Treasures” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

Showing Their Treasures .-Li Hung Chang, the greatest of the Chinese, is visiting the West for the first time. He is visiting the Powers called “Christian,” and all are showing him the greatest treasures. The exhibits seem to be mostly of military and naval appliances, and he must have seen enough to convince him of the great skill of Western nations in manufacturing appliances for killing. Each Power evidently wants him to see enough to make him wish for so powerful an ally, or at least to hesitate uniting China to any combination which would bring these armaments upon his people. Whether the object is to woo or to terrify, it may be difficult for him to tell, but it is pitiful to see this aged statesmen, almost in his grave, visiting the West to see what the highest civilisation produces, and having his attention mostly concerned with the machinery and man?uvers of war. A military and naval journal urges that when he comes here he be given a view of the fleet of Great Britain in English waters, “as a counterpoise to any impression his previous experiences on the Continent have made on his mind.” Who could blame him if he returned to China with the impression intensified which the Chinese already have formed from their contact with professedly Christian nations, that Christianity is not a religion of peace, but of brute force. But it will not be the fault of Christianity. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 450.3}

**“‘Despise Not One of These Little Ones’” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

It was Christ Himself who said: “Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come: but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!” Matthew 18:7. We can look for no higher authority than this, and here the express statement is made that offences will come. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 450.4}

The line of thought is that of offences against little ones. In the preceding verse Christ declared that it were better for a man to have been drowned in the deep sea, with a millstone about his neck, than to have committed an offence against one of the little ones that believed in Him. And all this was said as the little child stood in the midst of them,-that little toddling boy whom Christ had called to Him, and had set there as a simple and unmistakable object lesson to enforce the reply He was about to make to those who had asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 450.5}

Such as that little child, He told them, would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven,-and indeed they who were not such as that little one would not even enter there. And such was His love for those little ones, and for those who should humble themselves to be like them, that He identified Himself with them, and said: “Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me.” Then he who commits an offence against one of these little ones with whom Christ so identified Himself commits an offence against Christ. And yet He said these offences would come,-and have they not? Indeed, how bitterly have Christ’s little ones been misused! Just such little ones as those whom He took in His arms, and pressed to His heart, and said-“of such as the kingdom of heaven.” How long has been the list of offences committed against them! How many men have rendered themselves subject to that denunciation-“woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!” {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 450.6}

How little they thought that an angel of light stood before the Father in heaven, the guardian spirit of each of these little ones, and brought accusations of every offence committed. How little they recognised the fact that these very little ones in whom Adam’s sin had sown the seeds of death, Christ came to save from that death, as the anxious, tender shepherd seeks the lost and helpless lambs in the mountains, and rejoices over it as it is found more than over the ninety and nine that were left in the fold,-it being His will that “not one of these little ones should perish.” {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 450.7}

**“The Law and the Mediator” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Law and the Mediator .-We are told that the law was ordained “in the hand of a Mediator.” Galatians 3:19. Who was the Mediator in whose hand the law was ordained?-“There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all.” 1 Timothy 2:5, 6. The law, therefore, was given from Sinai by Christ, who is and always was the manifestation of God to man. He is the Mediator, that is, the One through whom the things of God are brought to man. The righteousness of God is conveyed to men through Jesus Christ. The statement that the law was given in the hand of the Mediator, reminds us that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. The fact that the law was in the hand of a Mediator, at Sinai, shows us this: (1) That God did not mean that anyone should suppose that he must get the righteousness of the law by his own power, but only through Christ. (2) That the Gospel of Christ was displayed at Sinai as well as at Calvary. (3) That the righteousness of God which is revealed in the Gospel of Christ, is the identical righteousness that is described in the law as given from Sinai, without the alteration of a letter. The righteousness which we are to obtain in Christ is none other than that. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 450.8}

**“True Learning” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

True Learning .-The Psalmist has said: “The entrance of Thy words giveth light: it giveth understanding unto the simple.” The words of the Lord are our wisdom, and theirs is the wisdom which shall not pass away. He who is learned in the Word of the Lord has gained that which will make him wise, not only for time but for all eternity. Such an one has indeed chosen the good thing which will never be taken from him. His is a learning which will survive all vicissitudes, and bring him well furnished to begin his studies in the Divine university of eternity. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 450.9}

**“The Call of Abraham. The Promise of Victory” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

We have noted the repetition of the promise, and the oath which confirmed it. But there is yet one very important feature of the promise which has not been specially noted. It is this: “And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.” Genesis 22:17. This is worth most careful attention, for it presents the consummation of the Gospel. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.1}

Let it never be forgotten that “to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to they seed, which is Christ.” Galatians 3:16. There is only one seed, and that is Christ; but “as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ,” so that they are all one in Christ Jesus. And “if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Verse 29. The seed is Christ and those who are His, and it is nothing else. The Bible nowhere sets forth any other seed of Abraham. Therefore the promise to Abraham amounted to this: Christ, and those who are His-thy seed-shall possess the gate of their enemies. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.2}

By one man sin came into the world. The temptation came through Satan, the archenemy of Christ. Satan and his hosts are the enemies of Christ, and of everything that is like Christ. They are the enemies of all good, and of all men. “The enemy” that sowed the tares is the devil. The name “Satan” means adversary. “Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” 1 Peter 5:8. The promise that Abraham’s seed should possess the gate of his enemies, is the promise of victory over sin and Satan, through Jesus Christ. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.3}

This is shown by the words of Zacharias the priest, when he was filled with the Holy Ghost. He prophesied, saying, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began: that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant; the oath which He swear unto our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.” Luke 1:68-75. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.4}

These words were spoken on the occasion of the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. They are a direct reference to the promise and the oath which we are studying. They were prompted by the Holy Spirit. Therefore we are simply following the Spirit when we say that the promise of possession of the gate of our enemies means deliverance from the power of the hosts of Satan. When Christ sent out the twelve, He “gave them power and authority over all devils.” Luke 9:1. This power is to be with His church till the end of time, for Christ said, “These signs shall follow them that believe; in My name shall they cast out devils,” etc. Mark 16:17. And again, “He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father.” John 14:12. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.5}

But death came by sin, and as Satan is the author of sin, so he has the power of death. A theology derived from heathenism may lead man to say that death is a friend; but every funeral train, and every bitter tear shed for the dead, proclaims that it is an enemy. The Bible so declares it, and tells of its destruction. Speaking of and to the brethren, it says:- {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.6}

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ’s at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till he hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” 1 Corinthians 15:22-26. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.7}

This tells us that the end is at the coming of the Lord, and that when that takes place all Christ’s enemies will have been put under His feet, in accordance with the word of the Father to the Son, “Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.” Psalm 110:1. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. John in vision saw the dead small and great stand before God to be judged, at the last great day. Those whose names were not in the Lamb’s book of life, were cast into the lake of fire. “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power.” Revelation 20:14, 6. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.8}

The promise, “Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies,” cannot be fulfilled except by victory over all enemies by all the seed. Christ has conquered; and we even now may give thanks to God, who “giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ;” but the battle is not yet over, even with us; there are very many who will be overcomers at last, who have not yet enrolled themselves under the Lord’s banner; and some who are now His may turn from the faith. The promise therefore embraces nothing less than the completion of the work of the Gospel, and the resurrection of all the righteous-the children of Abraham-and the putting on of immortality, at the second coming of Christ. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.9}

“If ye are Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” But the possession of the Holy Spirit is the distinguishing characteristic of those who are Christ’s. “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” But whoever has the Spirit has the surety of the resurrection, for “if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” Romans 8:11. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.10}

Thus we see that the hope of the promise made to Abraham was the resurrection of the dead, at the coming of the Lord. The hope of Christ’s coming is the “blessed hope” that has cheered God’s people since the days of Abraham, yea, even from the days of Adam. We often say that all the sacrifices pointed forward to Christ, and we almost as often fail to realise what is meant by that statement. It cannot mean that they pointed forward to the time when forgiveness of sins should be obtained, for all the patriarchs had that as much as anyone has had it since the crucifixion of Christ. Abel and Enoch are especially mentioned, among a multitude of others, as having been justified by faith. The cross of Christ was as real a thing in the days of Abraham as it possibly can be to any who live to-day. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 451.11}

What then is the real significance of the statement that all the sacrifices from Abel down to the time of Christ pointed to Christ? It is this: It is clear that they showed the death of Christ; that needs no second statement. But what is the death of Christ without the resurrection? Paul preached only Christ and Him crucified, yet he most vigorously preached “Jesus and the resurrection.” To preach Christ crucified is to preach Christ risen. But the resurrection of Christ has in it the resurrection of all that are His. The well instructed and believing Jew, therefore, showed, by the sacrifices that he offered, his faith in the promise to Abraham, which should be fulfilled at the coming of the Lord. The flesh and blood of the victim represented the body and blood of Christ, just the same as the bread and the wine of the Lord’s supper, by which we, even as they did, “show the Lord’s death till He come.” {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.1}

**“Prophesying Peace” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

Prophesying Peace .-The Bible Echo, Melbourne, says: At the installation of Lord Brassey as “Most Worshipful Grand Master” of the Free Masons of Victoria, Chief Justice Way, of South Australia, who performed the ceremony, said:- {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.2}

Standing on the floor of this Grand Lodge-breathing the serene atmosphere of brotherly love, undisturbed by “wars or rumours of wars”-we hold fast to the great principles of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and confidently look forward to the golden age when our labours shall find their happy consummation “in the parliament of man, in the federation of the world;” when they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; when nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.3}

Thus many are looking for what will never come,-a “golden age” before the end of the world, a millennium of peace. They would better be preparing for the “time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation” (Daniel 12:1), for that is what is coming. Thousands read the prophecy in Isaiah 2 and Micah 4 about swords and ploughshares so carelessly as to misread it altogether. This is what the people say; but God says exactly the opposite. See Joel 3:9, 10. Thus Paul wrote, “When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them.” 1 Thessalonians 5:3. It is not peace, but war that awaits the world; not a golden age, but a time of trouble. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.4}

**“Russian Creed vs Russian Practice” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

There are some very interesting questions and replies in the Larger Catechism of the Russian or Eastern Church, prepared for the use of schools, and printed in Moscow under direction of the Holy Synod. It is put out, therefore, by the highest authority of the Greek Church. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.5}

On the Ten commandments it says:- {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.6}

491. Did Jesus Christ teach men to walk by the Ten Commandments? {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.7}

He bade men if they would attain to everlasting life to keep the commandments; and taught us to understand and fulfil them more perfectly than had been done before He came. Matthew 19:17 and v. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.8}

This is very good. Now take what the Catechism says of the fourth commandment:- {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.9}

536. Why is it commanded to keep the seventh, rather than any other day, holy to God? {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.10}

Because God in six days made the world, and on the seventh day rested from the work of creation. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.11}

537. Is the Sabbath kept in the Christian Church? {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.12}

It is not kept, strictly speaking, as a holy day; but still in memory of the creation of the world, and in a continuation of its original observance, it is distinguished from the other days of the week by a relaxation of the rule for fasting. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.13}

The ingenuousness of the replies is delightful. The commandment says, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” Yet in the Russian Church, as in others, it is not kept “strictly speaking.” This practical disobedience of the commandment of the Lord is so evident that the Catechism anticipates the question that would surely come to the lips of the average schoolboy:- {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.14}

538. How, then, does the Christian Church obey the fourth commandment? {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.15}

A better question would be, “Why does it disobey, ‘strictly speaking’?” Or “How can one keep the seventh day, when he doesn’t keep it?” But here is the answer:- {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.16}

She still to every six days keeps a seventh, only not the last of the seven days, which is the Sabbath, but the first day in every week, which is the day of the Resurrection, or Lord’s day. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.17}

This, of course, begs the question entirely, as the Lord’s day is the day which He claims as His—“My holy day”—which the Lord says is the seventh, nor does the Lord ask us to commemorate His resurrection by breaking His law, to sustain which, and yet save the sinner, He died and rose again. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.18}

**HOW TO MEET WICKED LAWS**

In a comment on the fifth commandment the Russian Catechism sets forth the true principle on which the Christian should act when governments or any other power comes between the soul and God. Would that the Russian authorities could practise the principle as well as they can profess it:- {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.19}

572. How ought we to act, if it fall out that our parents or governors require of us anything contrary to the faith or to the law of God? {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.20}

In that case we should say to them, as the apostles said to the rulers of the Jews. Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; and we should be ready, for the sake of the faith and the law of God, to endure the consequences, whatever they may be. Acts 4:19. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.21}

Excellent! And yet when our brethren in Russia follow the fourth commandment, or when Stundists and others refuse to obey those laws of the Greek Church and Russian State which come between God and man’s service, the same “Holy Synod” is in no mood to listen to such a reply as they here give. But that is the reply they do get, and it is a good one. And the consequences follow-it may be banishment or it may be imprisonment. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 452.22}

**“War and Warrior Ants” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

It is often said that boyhood is cruel. Perhaps it is so,-but if it is so why is it? It is because boyhood is thoughtless. Personal experience has not yet developed sympathy for the sufferings of others. But if this is true, tender thoughtfulness should increase with age and mental development. All human beings should be humane. Those human beings who are not humane but inhuman, are, as shown by common consent expressed in the formation of speech, by just so much lacking in the development of their manhood and womanhood. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 453.1}

It is animal nature to fight. Yet not all animals delight in cruelty and deeds of blood. Only the carnivorous creatures, birds and beasts of prey, seem to delight in causing suffering, and kill for the sake of killing. However, all animated nature seems to share in the desire for conquest. The pugnacious little sparrows will sometimes fight with such ferocity that they apparently become almost oblivious to their surroundings, and flutter and tussle and roll about the lawn or the dusty street like furious little game-cocks. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 453.2}

Even those models of insect life, the industrious ant and the busy bee, are filled with the spirit of conquest and organise their wars with a skill and ability equal to that which they show in their industrial pursuits. An interested observer of nature has given us this vivid and circumstantial account of a battle which he witnessed:- {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 453.3}

“One day when I went to my wood-pile I observed two large ants, the one red, the other much larger, nearly half an inch long, and black, fiercely contending with one another. Having once got hold they never let go, but struggled and wrestled and rolled on the chips incessantly. Looking farther I was surprised to find that the chips were covered with such combatants, that it was not a duel but a war, a war between two races of ants, the red always pitted against the black, and frequently two red ones to one black. It was evident that their battle cry was-Conquer or die. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 453.4}

In the meanwhile there came along a single red ant on the hillside of this valley, evidently full of excitement, who had either despatched his foe, or had not yet taken part in the battle; probably the latter, for he had lost none of his limbs; whose mother had charged him to return with his shield or upon it. He saw this unequal combat from afar off,-for the blacks were nearly twice the size of the reds,-he drew near with rapid pace till he stood on his guard within half an inch of the combatants; then, watching his opportunity, he sprang upon the black warrior, and commenced his operations near the root of his right foreleg, leaving the foe to select among his own members. I should not have wondered by this time to find that they had their respective musical bands stationed on some eminent chip, and playing their national airs the while, to excite the slow and cheer the dying combatants. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 454.1}

“I took up the chip on which the three I have particularly described were struggling, carried them into my house, and placed it under a tumbler on my window-sill, in order to see the issue. Holding a microscope to the first-mentioned red ant, I saw that, though he was assiduously gnawing at the foreleg of his enemy, having severed his remaining feeler, his own breast was all torn away, exposing what vitals he had there to the jaws of the black warrior, whose breast-plate was apparently too thick for him to pierce; and the dark carbuncles of the sufferer’s eyes shone with ferocity such as war only could excite. They struggled half an hour longer under the tumbler, and when I looked again the black soldier had severed the heads of his foes from their bodies, and they were hanging on either side of him, like ghastly trophies at his saddle-bow, still apparently as firmly fastened as ever, and he was endeavouring with feeble struggles, being without feelers and with only the remnant of a leg, and I know not how many other wounds, to divest himself of them; which at length, after half an hour more, he accomplished. I raised the glass, and he went off the window-sill in that crippled state. I never learned which party was victorious, nor the cause of the war; but I felt for the rest of the day as if I had had my feelings excited and harrowed by witnessing the struggle, the ferocity and carnage, of a human battle before my door.” {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 454.2}

Were it not that this description was written many years ago, one might almost think the writer had in mind to give an allegorical account of a battle in a race war in Africa. However, had that been so he could have no doubt as to which party was eventually victorious, although he would very likely have been just as uncertain as to the cause of the war. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 454.3}

What is the state of human development when mature men and civilised nations emulate the beasts of prey, the fighting sparrows, and the warrior ants, in their deed; of violence and wars of conquest? Emulate them indeed! Yes, far exceed them. But, if it be acknowledged that boyhood is thoughtlessly and ignorantly cruel, then are we still in the boyhood of mankind? No, that excuse will not hold good,-for the most ancient peoples are among the most cruel and blood-thirsty. The terrible cruelties which have recently been perpetrated in the East have been the work of those same Medes of whom Isaiah said that they should dash the young men to pieces and should not spare children. Isaiah 13:16, 17. No, it is not youth,-it is not thoughtlessness,-it is not ignorance,-the world is growing old in lust and murder, and cruelty and crime. Brilliant uniforms, and martial music, and scientific appliances for slaughter do not Christianise warfare, or make it possible for Christian men to take part in it. “Thou shalt not kill,” applies just as much to him who carries a sword and wears a uniform as it did to Cain who was clad in a sheepskin and used a club. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 454.4}

**“God’s Choice” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

God knows where we can do the most good better than we do. Hence it is well for us to realise that we are just where we ought to be when we are in the place where God has set us. “If each drop of rain chose where it should fall,” says Charles Kingsley, “God’s showers would not fall, as they do now, on the evil and the good alike.” So it is that the world is benefited by God’s choosing the place for His individual workers in the world. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 457.1}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

-The Dutch are still fighting in their East Indies possessions. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.1}

-During the year ending 1895, Russia increased its national deist by ?48,000,000. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.2}

-Another disaster has visited Japan, thousands of houses being destroyed by floods. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.3}

-Cyprus had a continuous series of earthquake shocks last week, alarming the people and interfering with business. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.4}

-It is reported that 60,000 Kurds in the Diarbekir district of Turkey have revolted, and are pillaging the districts indiscriminately. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.5}

-The average wealth per head of the population of all countries shows that England comes first, France second, and the United States third. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.6}

-The Queen does not now walk about her own residences, and will be wheeled into the chapel at Buckingham Palace on the occasion of the royal marriage. She never moves without her stick. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.7}

-Postal returns show that the average number of letters per head written in England in a year is 60. Other countries are, France, 89; Switzerland, 74; United States, 110; Germany, 40; Italy, 16. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.8}

-The Premier of New Zealand has introduced a Bill to pension every one above sixty-five after twenty years’ residence in New Zealand, the maximum amount to be 10s. weekly and the minimum 5s. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.9}

-In 1874 there were 3,630,300 acres of land devoted to the growing of wheat in Great Britain and 183,711 sores in Ireland. In 1895 only 1.417,614 acres were thus cultivated in Great Britain and 36,529 acres in Ireland. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.10}

-China’s national debt now amounts to ?40,000,000, and it is said that additional taxation will be necessary to secure revenues. Meanwhile, the insurrection that started last year in the western provinces still continues, and the national troops are said to be powerless to put it down. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.11}

-The skilled labourer in Japan gets from five. pence to eightpence a day, and it is said his living expenses are about three-halfpence a day. Such conditions are being combined with modern machinery, and observers say that Japan will compete with Manchester on very favourable terms in a short time. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.12}

-It is now hoped that the Cretan insurrection will be shortly settled by uniforms allowed by the Turkish Government. The Mohammedan population has had more loss than the “Christian” in this insurrection, as the latter are in overwhelming majority in the island, and understand well the use of sword and torch. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.13}

-The latest reports from South Africa are to the effect that nearly all the Mashonas have joined the Matabele in their efforts to out the whites from Rhodesia. Earl Gray, the Administrator of the Chartered Company predicts a speedy end of the war, and thinks they will be able to afford the natives “a larger measure of protection against such ill-treatment as he in afraid they have suffered from in the past, and which, he is informed, has been not the least potent of the causes of the present rebellion.” {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 462.14}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

Considerable discussion is going on over the Border concerning the increase of Ritualism in the Church of Scotland. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.1}

In planning for a holiday be sure to make recreation what it should be-re-creation. Too often it is far from being this. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.2}

“People talk of the sacrifice I have made,” said Livingstone, “in spending so much of my life in Africa. Say, rather, it is a privilege. I never made a sacrifice.” {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.3}

It speaks well of the Russian Stundists that in some parts of the country who refuse the national peasant drink, “vodka,” is to bring upon one the charge of being a Stundist. Stundism has so far been a Bible reform movement, and temperance always follows the reception of the Word. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.4}

Almost any pugnacious beast will fight for his rights. Any vigorous heathen will do so. But it takes a Christian, following Christ’s example, to give up his rights without bitterness of feeling. The Father’s right to His service was the right which Christ maintained, and that is the only right which the Christian cannot relinquish. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.5}

Vienna has the reputation of being one of the gayest cities in Europe, and it is entirely in keeping with this reputation that it furnishes about the highest rate of suicides. The report for the first half of this year shows that 200 suicides occurred in the city. The more empty gaiety and pleasure-seeking, the greater is the disgust with life. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.6}

**“Two Free Prisoners” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

Two Free Prisoners .-There were two free men, once, who were in prison, in Macedonia. We do not know that there were any others in the city so free. They had their feet fast in the stocks, and their backs had been scourged. But they were so free that they could not contain themselves, and they sang songs in the night. Their liberty was religious liberty, a freedom which was theirs even with their bodies in stocks and in prison. And the Lord showed them they were his freedmen also by sending an earthquake and loosening their bonds. But they were no more religiously free after than before. They had religious liberty. They lived amongst an oppressive people, and under pagan and anti-Christian laws, but that did not hinder them from rejoicing in the liberty with which Christ makes men free. What a freedom that was! So free the prison walls could not take away their freedom. That is a freedom greater than can be guaranteed by any government on earth. They were so free that the prison couldn’t contain them. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.7}

**“No Place for Christians” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

No Place for Christians .-The theatre has always been a pronounced agent of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and it is to be doubted if ever it was more so than at the present time. It may have been coarser, but not more insidiously evil. One has only to note the scheme of the plays in newspaper announcements, or to see flaming posters, to see that they are so inane and void that they are kept up only by the suggestiveness of passion and intrigue, or of shallow folly which amuses empty minds. At a time when there is a distinct effort being made to introduce a flavour of religious feeling into some plays, it is well to remember that it takes something besides the faint flavour of imitation rosewater to cleanse a sewer. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.8}

**“Raising Church Funds” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

Raising Church Funds .-Speaking at the annual meeting of the East London Church Fund last week, Lord Salisbury rebuked the scandalous methods resorted to nowadays to get people to give. They were taught, he said, that they must eat a bad dinner, or attend a ball or garden party before they could be charitable. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.9}

So it goes. There must always be some secondary machinery. The largest effort a Christian makes he makes in response to an organisation, by which he is invited to purchase worthless articles at ridiculous prices. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.10}

He could not help thinking that there was something wrong in the state of Christian feeling amongst the laity which makes these strange devices necessary. He even felt his own presence there was a reflection on the power which their Bishop ought to exercise without any assistance. It was a strange contrast to what happened in the earlier days of Christianity. When they read of what happened when Paul exhorted the Corinthians to send relief to their suffering fellow-Christians in Jerusalem, they did not read that it was found necessary to have a bazaar, or a public dinner, or even a public meeting with a Roman magistrate to make a speech. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.11}

Lord Salisbury’s speech is a crushing rebuke of that spirit which is so rampant. When people refuse to give of their means to the Lord’s work it is not entertaining that they need, but converting. It ought to make the organisers of these devices pause and think when the Premier and statesman is forced to rebuke this resort to worldly methods of money-getting. Statesmen have also to pass laws to keep some of these same elements from establishing lotteries and gambling for church purposes, and even then we now and then read of raffles at church bazaars patronised by the highest in the land. Let all keep separate from these things. If a man believes the truth he will freely give to send it on to others. If he does not believe it the Lord does not need his funds. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.12}

**“Clericalism in Politics” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

Clericalism in Politics .-Austria has lately been passing some new laws to prevent the interference of the clerical power in politics. The clergy have used their position as priests and confessors to terrify or influence its voters to keep things in the hands of partisans of the church party. So far have they gone that in an intensely Roman Catholic country like Austria the people are driven in self-defence to legislate to keep priestcraft out of politics. In the recent Canadian elections, also, the priests issued a manifesto ordering Catholics to vote for certain candidates. The result, however, was that their arrogance was resented and some Catholic secular organs plainly told the priests to attend to religion and give a free hand in politics to the people. What a spectacle when the world has to defend itself against the schemes of those whose profession is to be ministers of another kingdom, not of this world. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.13}

**“The Prayer of Faith” The Present Truth, 12, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Prayer of Faith .-Christ’s words in regard to the answer to prayer are unequivocal. In one place he says: “If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.” There is no mistaking the plain language of the statement. To him who believes, then, all things that are worthy to be accomplished our possible,-for wherever two agree, in asking, their prayer of faith will be effectual. Then what remains is to believe, have faith, and pray. “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” Mark 9:23. “Have faith in God.... What things soever ye desire, when ye pray believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” Mark 11:23, 24. {PTUK July 16, 1896, p. 464.14}

**“The Promises to Israel. A General View” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city.” Hebrews 11:8-16. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 465.1}

**ALL HEIRS**

The first thing that we note in this scripture is that all these were heirs. We have already learned that Abraham himself was to be no more than an heir in his lifetime, because he was to die before His seed returned from captivity. But Isaac and Jacob, his immediate descendants, were likewise heirs. The children were heirs with their father of the same promised inheritance. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 465.2}

Not only this, but there sprang from Abraham “so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable.” These were also heirs of the same promise, for these also “all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” Mark this, the vast host of Abraham’s descendants “died in faith, not having received the promises.” Note that it says “promises.” It was not simply a part that they did not receive, but the whole. All the promises are in Christ only, who is the seed, and they could not be fulfilled to those who are His before they are to Him; and even He yet waits for His foes to be made His footstool. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 465.3}

In harmony with these words, that they died in faith, not having received the promises, but confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, we have the words of King David hundreds of years after the deliverance from Egypt, “I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.” Psalm 39:12. And when at the height of his power he delivered the kingdom to his son Solomon, in the presence of all the people, he said, “For we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.” 1 Chronicles 29:15. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 465.4}

The reason why this innumerable company did not receive the promised inheritance, is stated in these words: “God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” The further particulars will be considered when we come to their times. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 465.5}

**A CITY AND COUNTRY**

Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The city with foundations is thus described in Revelation 21:10-14, 19:-“And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon; which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel; on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.” “And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 465.6}

That is a partial description of the city for which Abraham looked. His descendants also looked for the same city, for we read descriptions of it in the ancient prophets. They might have had a home on this earth, if they had desired. The land of the Chaldees was as fertile as the land of Palestine, and it would have sufficed for a temporal home for them as well as any other land. But neither one would satisfy them, for “now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 466.1}

This scripture kept in mind will guide us in all our subsequent study of the children of Israel. The true children of Abraham never looked for the fulfillment of the promise on this present earth, but in the earth made new. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 466.2}

**ISAAC AN ILLUSTRATION**

This desire for a heavenly country made the true heirs very easy to get along with in temporal affairs, as is illustrated in the life of Isaac. He went to sojourn in the land of the Philistines, and sowed in that land, “and received in the same year an hundredfold; and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great; for he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants; and the Philistines envied him.... And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.” Genesis 26:12-17. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 466.3}

Although Isaac was mightier than the people in whose land he dwelt, he went from them at their request, even when he was prospering abundantly. He would not strive for the possession of an earthly estate. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 466.4}

The same spirit was manifested after he went to dwell in Gerar. The servants of Isaac dug anew the wells that had belonged to Abraham, and also dug in the valley and found living water. But the herdmen of Gerar strove with them, saying, “The water is ours.” So they went and dug another well; but the herdmen of Gerar claimed that also. “And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not; and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.” Genesis 26:18-22. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 466.5}

“And the Lord appeared to him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father; fear not for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for My servant Abraham’s sake. And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there.” Verses 24, 25. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 466.6}

Isaac had the promise of a better country, that is, an heavenly, and therefore he would not strive for the possession of a few square miles of land on this sin-cursed earth. Why should he? It was not the inheritance that the Lord had promised him; and why should he fight for a part in the land wherein he was only a so-journer? True, he had to live, but he allowed the Lord to manage that for him. When driven from one place, he went to another, until at last he found quiet, and then he said, “The Lord hath made room for us.” In this he showed the true spirit of Christ, “who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself (His cause) to Him that judgeth righteously.” 1 Peter 2:23. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 466.7}

In this we have an example. If we are Christ’s, then are we Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. Therefore we shall follow the precepts of Christ. Here is one: “I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right check, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law,1 and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also” (Matthew 5:39, 40), are thought by many professed Christians to be fanciful, and altogether impractical. But they are designed for daily use. Christ practiced them, and we have an example in the case of Isaac. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 466.8}

“But we should lose everything that we have in the world, if we should do as the text says,” we hear it said. Well, even then we should be in no worse circumstances than Christ the Lord was here on earth. But we are to remember that “your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” He who cares for the sparrows, is able to care for those who commit their case to Him. We see that Isaac was prospered even though he did not “fight for his rights.” The promise which was made to the fathers is also made to us, by very same God. “When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers” in the land; “when they went from one nation to another, and from one kingdom to another people, He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, He reproved kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not Mine anointed and do My prophets no harm.” Psalm 105:12-15. That same God still cares for those who put their trust in Him. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 466.9}

The inheritance which the Lord has promised to His people, the seed of Abraham, is not to be obtained by fighting, except with spiritual weapons-the armour of Christ-against the hosts of Satan. They who seek the country which God has promised, declare that they are strangers and pilgrims on this earth. They cannot use the sword, even in self-defence, much less for conquest. The Lord is their defender. He says: “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green.” Jeremiah 17:5-8. He has not promised that all our wrongs shall be righted at once, or even in this life; but He doth not forget the cry of the poor, and He has said, “Vengeance is Mine; I will repay.” Romans 12:19. “Therefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.” 1 Peter 4:19. We may do this in full confidence that “the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor.” Psalm 140:12. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 466.10}

**ESAU’S INFIDELITY**

The case of Esau furnishes another incidental proof that the inheritance promised to Abraham and his seed was not a temporal one, to be enjoyed in this life, but eternal, to be shared in the life to come. The story is told in these words:- {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.1}

“And Jacob sod pottage; and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: and Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint; therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swear unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way; thus Esau despised his birthright.” Genesis 25:29-34. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.2}

In the Epistle to the Hebrews Esau is called a “profane person,” because he sold his birthright. This shows that there was something besides mere foolishness in the transaction. One would say that it was childish to sell a birthright for a meal of victuals; but it was worse than childish; it was wicked. It showed that he was an infidel, feeling nothing but contempt for the promise of God to his father. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.3}

Notice these words of Esau’s, when Jacob asked him to sell his birthright: “Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do me?” He had no hope beyond this present life, and looked no further. He did not feel sure of anything that he did not actually possess in this present time. No doubt he was very hungry. It is probable that he felt as if he were really at the point of death; but even the prospect of death made no difference with Abraham and many others. They died in faith, not having received the promises, but were persuaded of them, and embraced them. Esau, however, had no such faith. He had no belief in an inheritance beyond the grave. Whatever he was to have he wanted now. Thus it was that he sold his birthright. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.4}

The course of Jacob is not by any means to be commended. He acted the part of a supplanter, which was his natural disposition. His case is an illustration of a crude unintelligent faith. He believed that there was something to the promise of God, and he respected his father’s faith, although as yet he really possessed none of it. He believed that the inheritance promised to the fathers would be bestowed, but he had so little spiritual knowledge that he supposed the gift of God might be purchased with money. We know that even Abraham thought at one time that he himself must fulfill the promise of God. So Jacob doubtless thought, as many do still, that “God helps those who help themselves.” Afterwards he learned better, and was truly converted, and exercised as sincere faith as Abraham and Isaac. His case should be an encouragement to us, in that it shows what God can do with one who has a very unlovely disposition, provided he yields to Him. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.5}

The case of Esau is set thus forth before us as a warning:- {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.6}

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord; looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.” Hebrews 12:14-17. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.7}

Esau was not the only foolish and profane person there has been in the world. Thousands have done the same thing that he did, even while blaming him for his folly. The Lord has called us all to share the glory of the inheritance which he promised to Abraham. By the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead He has begotten us again to a living hope, “to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Peter 1:3-5. This inheritance of righteousness we are to have through the obedience of faith-obedience to God’s holy law, the ten commandments. But when men learn that it requires the observance of the seventh day, the Sabbath kept by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all Israel, they shake their heads. “No,” say they, “I cannot do that; I should like to, and I see that it is a duty; but if I should keep it I could not make a living. I should be thrown out of employment, and should starve together with my family.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.8}

That is just the way Esau reasoned. He was about to starve, or, at least, he thought that he was, and so he deliberately parted with his birthright for something to eat. But most men do not even wait until they are apparently at the point of death, before they sell their right to the inheritance for something to eat. They imagine dangers that do not exist. Men do not starve to death for serving the Lord. We are entirely dependent upon Him for our life under all circumstances, and if He keeps us when we are trampling on His law, He surely is as able to keep us when we are serving Him. The Saviour says that to worry over the future, fearing lest we should starve, is a characteristic of heathenism, and gives us this positive assurance, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:21-33. The Psalmist says, “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread.” Even though we should lose our lives for the sake of the truth of God, we should be in good company. See Hebrews 11:32-38. Let us beware of so lightly esteeming the rich promises of God that we shall part with an eternal inheritance for a morsel of bread, and when it is too late find that there is no place for repentance. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.9}

*ldquo;My Father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands;
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full-He has riches untold. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.10}*

*“I’m the child of a King, the child of a King;
With Jesus, my Saviour, I’m the child of a King. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.11}*

*“My Father’s own Son, the Saviour of men,
Once wandered o’ er earth as the poorest of them;
But now He is reigning for ever on high,
And will give me a home in heaven by and by. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.12}*

*“I once was an outcast stranger on earth,
A sinner by choice, and an alien by birth;
But I’ve been adopted, my name’s written down-
An heir to a mansion, robe, and a crown. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.13}*

*“A tent or a cottage, why should I care?
They’re building a palace for me over there!
Though exiled from home, yet still I may sing,
All glory to God, I’m the child of a King!” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.14}*

**“Borrowed from Paganism” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

Borrowed from Paganism .-In the Month, a Catholic magazine, a writer says: “No intelligent student of antiquity, Catholic or non-Catholic, would never hesitate to avow that many Christian ceremonies and observances have had their origin in pagan customs. We say ceremonies and observances, because such things do not touch in the least the essence of the Christian faith. It is one thing to admit that the Christians borrowed the liturgical use of incense and flowers, let us say, from the ideas of the pagan world in which they lived, and quite another to assert that they derived the doctrine of the blessed Eucharist, which is the foundation-stone of all Catholic worship, from some vague folk tradition about African priests and the corn spirit. How far this influence of paganism upon Christian ritual extended is a very obscure and difficult question, much too intricate to be treated here. But there are few facts for which such abundant evidence is forthcoming as the almost universal prevalence of the cross symbol in pre-Christian ages.” Notwithstanding the writer’s reservation, it is perfectly plain that the mysteries of the mass in Catholic doctrine are also borrowed from the ancient mysteries, associated with the sensuous sun-worship of the East. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 467.15}

**“Forgive Us Our Debts” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

One million eight hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds is a large sum,-and yet that is the amount owed by the servant who was called upon for his accounting in our Lord’s parable in the latter part of the eighteenth chapter of Matthew. Suspicion must attach to such an enormous arrearage. Either there was dishonesty in his transactions or at least extreme negligence and unfaithfulness. The discrepancy in his accounts was so great that not even the sale of all his property, and of himself and family into slavery, could suffice to return to his master anything more than a small moiety of the great sum he owed. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 468.1}

Yet when, at last, in hopeless contrition, he pleaded in anguish at the feet of his master, he was forgiven. The immense debt he owed was freely and entirely forgiven him. The account was balanced. It was hopeless that it could ever be expected that he could repay it, indeed that was impossible. He was not asked to repay it. He went out a free man, relieved of any necessity of ever paying his debt, and still in possession of the property which he had acquired and retained,-went out a free man to wife and children at home which he had forfeited and but for the gracious mercy of his master had lost beyond the possibility of recovery. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 468.2}

Yet notwithstanding this, almost immediately, apparently, as he went out from the presence of his master, he met with his fellow-servant who owed him but little more than three pounds, and, treating him with personal violence, refused to listen to his appeals for merciful extension of time in which to pay his debt, and cast him into the debtor’s prison to remain there until payment should be made. This was in strong contrast to the treatment which he had received from the Lord. And how insignificant was the sum which is fellow-servant owed him, compared with the amount in which he was indebted,-nearly two millions of pounds as against a little more than three pounds! {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 468.3}

No wonder his fellow-servants were sorry and came and told what he had done. No doubt they concurred in the justice of the punishment which then fell upon him. So, unquestionably, at the last day will all agree as to the justice of the penalties which will be meted out when the last words of this parable shall be fulfilled. “So likewise shall My Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.” Will that not be just? Who can say it will not, when they remember the words of the daily prayer,-“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”! {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 468.4}

**“When There Will Be No More War” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

The futility of the hope of universal peace, or any assurance of continued peace between the more civilised and enlightened nations even, to be secured by arbitration, is well shown by an article in the Atlantic Review, on the limits of arbitration, which is now being referred to and quoted by the reviewers. The writer of this article concludes that,- {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 468.5}

It cannot be expected that any controversy whatever which involves national honour will be submitted to arbitration by any nation capable of self-vindication. The same consideration will likewise prevent the reference to such a tribunal of any dispute involving the integrity of the territory of a nation, which has been occupied by its subjects under a claim of right for any considerable period of time on the faith of their country’s protection. And finally, it is obvious that in no case whatever can that remedy be successfully proposed, where popular feeling on one side or the other has reached fighting heat, and has passed beyond the control of representative government. A casual review of the wars that have occurred in modern times between countries so governed, and of the conditions that preceded them, will show how utterly futile in such emergencies would have been, or would be likely to be hereafter, the attempt at the lingering and uncertain process of submitting the quarrel that had set men’s minds on fire to the decision of foreign jurists. It will probably be apparent, therefore, to those who will reflect upon these suggestions, that it is a mistake to suppose that international arbitration can ever become, as has been fondly hoped, a substitute for war. On no such artificial and cumbrous contrivance can peace on earth and good will among men be made to depend. These reside in the temper of nations, not in the decision of courts. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 468.6}

This is unquestionably a sure result of the logic of nations. While human nature remains as it is no permanent and universal substitute for the trial by battle will ever be found. The character of a nation cannot rise above the characteristics of those who constitute that nation. So long as men are selfish, violent, and headstong, governments will possess and show the same traits. Indeed the only necessity for civil government arises out of these very facts, and when the time comes that there will be no more war and no fear of war for evermore, then there will be no need of human government, and there will be none, but His kingdom will have come. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 468.7}

**“The Rising Tide of Sunday Legislation” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

One of the most noteworthy signs of the times is the sudden springing up within a few years of a world-wide movement for securing stricter Sunday laws. In countries widely separated from one another, having no direct contact or mutual agreement in the matter, the same tendency is seen, showing that behind it all there is one mind, and that the governments and people are merely agents through which that mind or power works. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 468.8}

What power is it? There are only two sources of power by which work is done in the world-God, working in the interests of His kingdom, and Satan, in the interests of his. Whenever we find the powers of this world seeking to enforce religious observances it need not take long to decide which power is moving. “The Gospel is the power of God,” said Paul, and the kingdom of God is advanced by the preaching of the Word. The only power that the enemy of God can use is the power of which he obtained possession when he enticed men to join his rebellion-the power which the elements of earth afford him. The “god of this world” has always used the powers of this world in his fight against the truth. Having come down in great wrath, “because he knoweth that he hath but a short time” (Revelation 12:12), it is not strange that all the governments of this world are being constrained at this time to specially legislate along lines which make void the commandments of God. The Sunday law strikes straight at the Sabbath of the Lord, which is the sign of God’s power, and it is against that power that Satan has been warring ever since the creation of the world and of man. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 468.9}

The following summary, clipped from a contemporary, shows the progress the Sunday-law crusade is making on the Continent:- {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.1}

“The International Federation of Lord’s Day Societies has made a report as to work done in the year. Among the items of interest are the following: In France the Paris League for Sunday Rest has enrolled over 4,000 members. Many shops are closed on Sunday, including the great Magazin de Louvre. In the army Sunday is a day of rest, and contractors are not now obliged to work on that day. In Lyons there are more than 1,000 shops and stores closed entirely on Sunday. A commission has been sent to England from Germany to inquire into the laws applying the Sunday labour in factories and workshops. There has been a marked advance also in Austria, owing to an enactment in December, 1895, that on Sunday all work, industrial and commercial, shall cease, except such as is absolutely necessary. In Switzerland Sunday laws have been passed in nearly all the cantons. The post and telegraphic service are reduced one-half. No goods trains are run, and the goods depots are closed. Each employé on railways, steamboats, street road-cars, and the post office is allowed fifty-two days of rest, and seventeen of these must be on Sundays. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.2}

“In Belgium, on account of the anti-religious feeling, the Sunday as a day of rest is not named in the law which guarantees one rest day in each week for women and children; but in practice it is thus observed to a very great degree, and in many departments of labour Sunday work has been reduced. In Holland there are no Sunday newspapers, the railway traffic is reduced, and Sunday hours of rest are given to public servants, though a whole day on each Sunday is an exception, not the rule. In Denmark shops are closed at 9:00 A.M., and also factories, except where work is essential. In such cases the employés alternate Sundays. In Norway and Sweden factories and workshops close on Sundays, and no intoxicating liquors are sold from 5 o’clock Saturday afternoon until 8 o’clock Monday morning. There is not even bread-making on Sunday, and street railways are closed until afternoon. In the cities there is only one postal delivery at 8 o’clock in the morning, and railway servants get every third Sunday. The movement has extended to Russia, where a new law as to Sunday is in preparation, and where the post offices are open only from 12 to 2, and public-houses are closed until 11 o’clock in the morning. In Spain the Sunday work of young persons under eighteen years of age in factories is prohibited. In Japan, of the 600 newspapers and periodicals not one is published on Sunday. In India the Christian Literature Society is active and has accomplished considerable.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.3}

**“Who Cannot Help” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

Much discussion goes on as to the extent to which professed Christians can engage in amusements such as dancing, card-playing, theatre-going, all of which are outside the life of Jesus Christ. No one who seeks to defend these things would have the temerity to seriously argue that he could follow Jesus Christ into such circles. The sin and misery in the world are the same as when Christ walked in the flesh amongst men, and it is not to those who follow these pleasures that the lost turn when they want help to break away from the power of sin. Speaking of these forms of amusement a noted evangelist says:- {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.4}

“I have some quite one hundred thousand people publicly avow their faith in Jesus, the Saviour Divine, in meetings which I have had the pleasure of labouring in. But I have never yet met a person who was not a Christian who, brought under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, wanted anyone, even his most intimate friend, that was engaged in these worldly pastimes and pleasures, to point out to him the way of salvation. Such persons have no confidence in the religious professions of the man or the woman who is given over to worldliness.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.5}

**“‘Except Ye Become as Little Children’” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

When Jesus went away from Galilee into the borders of Judea, beyond Jordan, as related in the first verses of the nineteenth chapter of Matthew, a great multitude followed Him. It is evident that they were influenced by greatly varying motives. Many came to be healed. They presented their infirmities, and were healed. The Pharisees came tempting Him. They seemed fond of bringing before Him questions concerning the relationship of man and woman, and they drew from Him, this time, a clear, though far from flattering, explanation of the divorce regulations instituted by Moses, and an unequivocal statement of the original law of God on this subject. In this, as in every other similar instance, their mouths were stopped by His reply, and they had nothing more to say. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.6}

Then there were among those who followed Him loving parents who brought their little children to Him, and besought Him that He would lay His hands on them and pray for them and bless them. But a short time before the disciples had seen evidence of His tender love for the little ones, yet now they rebuked the parents for bringing their children, and would have sent them away only that Christ saw their action and was displeased and reproved them, saying, “Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.” Then He took them in His arms and put His hands on them and blessed them,-and repeated, as Mark tells us, the warning counsel which He had given His disciples previously, when they sought to know who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.7}

Mark says not only that Christ was displeased that His disciples would have sent the little children away, but that He was “Much displeased.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.8}

The feeble and infirm, and helpless infancy, Christ accepted as His special charge. They could come to Him with their personal needs, and desire for loving care and protection or expression of affection and regard, and have their wants satisfied fully. But they who came attempting were thwarted and sent away humbled. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.9}

So, multitudes come to the Word of God; whether they go away filled with spiritual health and joy and blessing, or thwarted and shamed like the Pharisees, depends on whether they come in the spirit of the sick and the helpless and the little children, or in the spirit of the Pharisees. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.10}

**“As the Dervishes Phrase It” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

As the Dervishes Phrase It .-The correspondence captured after the defeat of the Dervishes at Ferkeh shows how strong a religious sentiment animates them. The Mahdist cause is, of course, one of religious fanaticism, and under the self-deception which leads them to think they are fighting for God they fight just as any other warriors, for themselves, as lust or covetousness drives them on. One chief reported to another after a raid:- {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.11}

After salutations. I beg to inform you that God has given victory to His faith, and brought His enemies to naught. On Tuesday, the 22nd inst., we raided the village of Adendam, and God has destroyed all His enemies who were in that village. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.12}

After all, it differs little from that travesty of Christianity which leads professedly Christian powers to talk piously of thanks to God after a bloody victory over their fellows, one in the interests of commercial or other purely national affairs. Mohammedanism bears the sword, but Christianity has none of it, nor, as Christians get in touch with the Word, will they be found partaking of that world-spirit which glorifies deeds of arms and leads to the recurrence of war. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 469.13}

**“‘There Am I’” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

“There Am I.” -Among the comforting assurances of His continued personal care for His disciples, that in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew is one of the most definite and positive, where Christ says: “For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.” There was no limit of time, place, or persons, attached to this promise. It is just as good, and is to be counted upon as fulfilled, just as much to-day as the hour it was spoken. That this should be so is something which the scoffer rarely considers. “Thou God seest me” seems more than ordinarily applicable when one considers that wherever two or three are gathered together in His name He is actually there, though unseen. If this fact were only realised the seat of the scornful would be empty. The knowledge that He is present will cause every believer to respect all gatherings, however humble, where the name of the Lord is called upon. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 471.1}

**“An Indian Incident” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

The following interesting paragraph shows the influence of Christian example on the progress of religious truth in India:- {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 472.1}

“Pundita Ramabai and her home for Hindu widows, near Bombay, has just had a peculiar experience. While she herself is a pronounced Christian, in starting her institution she preferred to place it upon a foundation such as would not antagonise the Hindus. This aroused considerable criticism when she started her work. The result has been that while making no effort for direct Christian conversion, the general influence of her own life and of the home has been such that twelve of the child widows have announced their acceptance of Christianity. This aroused a great deal of opposition, and the student class is reported as particularly vehement in its denunciation. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 472.2}

“She resolved then to go straight to them and make her defence. In front of the hall a mob of these young men gathered, and there was fear of a disturbance. She addressed the audience with boldness and faithfulness, affirmed that the degradation of the community was due to Hinduism, and that Christianity alone was able to lift them out of moral degradation and helplessness. She declared that she had kept her promise; she had not sought to bring undue influence, but that the results were due to the power of the truth of God. There was much excitement, but no manifestation of disturbance. Apparently, her firm, heroic bearing over-powered those who would have been glad to oppose her.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 472.3}

Certainly the foundations of paganism, of caste, and the enslavement of woman, in India, are breaking up when such an incident as this can be recorded. That a woman should have the ability, the opportunity, and the will, to do such a thing as this, and should do it, means much in that land. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 472.4}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

-At Huddersfield 2,725 persons last week voted in favour of Sunday trams and 4,154 against. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.1}

-It is estimated that the drought in New South Wales has caused the loss of 9,500,000 sheep. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.2}

-Cholera has attacked some detachments of the Egyptian expedition in the Soudan. The military authorities expect to successfully resist it by sanitary precautions. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.3}

-A proclamation promising pardon to all Matebeles who surrender before August 10 has been published at Buluwayo. It is expected that the country will not be quiet for months yet. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.4}

-Spain, which has already spent ?20,000,000 in fighting the Cuban reb to, has voted another like amount to continue the campaign, which seems no nearer an end than when it began. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.5}

-The largest sheep owner in the world is said to be Mr. S. McCaughey, of the Caonong station, at Jerilderie, New South Wales. He has 3,000,000 acres of land, and last season sheared 1,000,000 sheep. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.6}

-Nearly every French President in recent years has been shot at with blank cartridges by some one with a grievance which he wanted to make public. Last week President Faure had the experience. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.7}

-A British force captured thirty-four Arab slave raiders in British Central Africa last week. They had just begun catching slaves and had but a few, who were released to return to home and friends. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.8}

-Old political lines in the United States are considerably broken by the platforms adopted in the pending presidential campaign, and it is expected that the fight between the parties will be exceptionally fierce. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.9}

-An exceptionally large number of wrecks and collisions on sea and land were reported last week. Shipping is so increasing, and the rate of travel is so largely increased over speeds maintained a few years ago that accidents are more common. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.10}

-Taking a recent work entitled, “Made in Germany” as a basis, one of this month’s reviews shown the effects of the revival of industrialism in Germany on British markets, and appeals for greater attention being given here at home to educating workmen in technical schools: “The fads are most alarming. In twenty-three years our population has increased by 7,000,000, but the declared value of our exports has fallen by ?30,000,000. In ten years, from 1889 to 1893, the value of German manufactured goods imported into this country went up by ?5,000,000, an increase of over 30 per cent. Samples of the results in foreign markets are the facts that Russia, which in 1893 took 78,000 tons of German iron and 59,000 tons of English, in 1895 took 168,000 tons from Germany, and only 60,000 from England; so in Italy; and in Japan in 1884 we sold 4,000,000 catties of rails, but in 1894 we sold only 3,000,000; whereas the German supply of rails to Japan increased from 2,000,000 catties to 19,000,000.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 478.11}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

The elections in Belgium have resulted in a victory for the Clerical party. The chamber will consist of 111 Clericals, 12 Liberals, 29 Socialists. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.1}

A London newspaper says: “The false glamour of war is kept up by war correspondents, who seldom or never speak of the horrors of war, and by the Church, which prays for victory in all causes, however bad.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.2}

Our friends in Cape Town are just beginning a Bible Institute, for workers and others, which will continue several months. We learn also, by friends recently from the Cape, that the sanatorium which our Society has been building in a suburb of Cape Town, is nearing completion, and will very shortly be ready for patients. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.3}

The Church Association, representing the Protestant section of the Church of England, is sending vans with colporteurs into country districts to campaign against Sacerdotalism. One thing which shows the need of Protestant work is the fact that in many districts these vans have not only the local clergy but bishops against them. At any rate they seem to be doing good among the people if we may judge by the strength of all the opposition to them on the part of Ritualists. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.4}

How zealously the churches in the United States are pressing the Sunday-law crusade may be seen from the following words written by a Seventh-day Adventist, who himself was recently arrested in Arkansas for not keeping Sunday. In a letter to the New York Sentinel he says: “My wife was in her house doing some hand-sewing. A woman passed and told her it was against the law to do anything on Sunday, and that you would be arrested if she did not stop.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.5}

The editor of the Investor’s Review warns investors that trouble is brewing in many quarters, and that the stock exchange will feel it one of these days. “So let the prudent men,” he says, “if any such remains alive in these times, gamble with caution and sometimes think of the morrow.” Many who give no thought to the signs of the times religiously, see that the world is whirling on toward the crisis. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.6}

**“Terrible Figures” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

Terrible Figures .-One of the reviews this month deals with the increase of murder in the United States. These are the facts:- {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.7}

During the last six years there has been an average of twenty homicides a day, year end and year out, in the United States. The daily average of executions is two, and the average of lynchings three; but last year the number of persons killed had risen from twenty to thirty per day. Five years ago the daily average was only twelve. A community in which murder increases nearly threefold in five years is clearly retrograding towards barbarism. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.8}

This has been called by a recent writer “the age of murder,” and as the United States is a composite of all nations it may represent the highest development of the natural tendencies in civilisation without Christianity. What a comment these figures are on the self-glorification which characterises boastful modern civilisation. Only this month one of our London magazines deals with the great increase of wealth, and another with the high development of the public educational system, in America, and yet all this does not prevent the country from ranking next to Italy in the murder list of the greater nations. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.9}

**“Blessing the Grog Shops” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

Blessing the Grog Shops .-The Russian State has taken over the sale of spirits, and so the spirit traffic becomes a State monopoly. As everything the Russian State does is “Christian” it was fitting that the new departure should be inaugurated last week by religious services in many of the drink shops now transferred to the Crown. The modern “Christian” State blesses what God abhors, and curses that which God has blessed. How could it be expected otherwise when we know that Satan is “the god of this world,” and this world is composed of all the kingdoms of men? That is why we pray, “Thy kingdom come.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.10}

**“And Yet Have Believed” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

And Yet Have Believed .-What a joyous satisfaction the Apostle John takes in recurring to the personal presence of the Saviour with himself and his fellow-disciples. In the fourteenth verse of the first chapter of his Gospel he says: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” In the first chapter of his first epistle he reiterate and amplifies the same thought with an added stress of feeling, born of years of meditation and experience, filled with a loving recurrence to the memories of his personal human association and fellowship with Jesus. With what joyful assurance he says, “We have seen with our eyes,” “we have looked upon, and our hands have handled” “the Word of life.” “The life was manifested and we have seen it,” it “was manifested to us.” “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.” This is “the message that we have heard of Him, and declare unto you.” To all those who read and hear these glad words of John is addressed that promise which Christ incorporated in His gentle rebuke to Thomas, “Blessed are they that have not seen; and yet have believed.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.11}

**“In the Pacific Islands” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the Pacific Islands .-Our Missionary ship Pitcairn expected to leave Pitcairn Island last month for a cruise touching Tahiti, and the Austral, Cook, Samoan, Tongan, and Fiji groups, leaving workers and literature. The medical missionary workers in the island fields are kept especially busy, and hardly less so are all the other teachers and labourers. The prophet said, “He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His law.” And our workers find many amongst these islanders who are only waiting for that “law of the Lord” which “is perfect, converting the soul.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.12}

**“The Eastern Question” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Eastern Question .-The newspapers are every day dealing with some phase of this great question which menaces the peace of Europe. The little work recently published from this office, “The Eastern Question: What Its Solution Means to all the World,” is one which we would that all might read. Those who have not read it should do so by all means in order to know the significance of events in the East. Price, 1d., by post, 1 1/2nd. {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.13}

**“Ever Learning, Never Knowing” The Present Truth, 12, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

Ever Learning, Never Knowing .-We read of some who are “ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” The trouble is that they do not make the truth a matter of life and heart knowledge. They merely learn theories, and are never anchored to the truth by heart knowledge of its principles. Therefore they are the prey of any plausible theory-monger that may come along, running here and there, following this and that, always learning, never knowing. “From such turn away.” {PTUK July 23, 1896, p. 480.14}

**“A Valuable Investment” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

Christ has said that whatever of the things of this world anyone shall forsake, for His name’s sake, shall be returned to him a hundredfold, with the addition of an eternity of possession and enjoyment of that which he has received. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 481.1}

The value of property is always enhanced in proportion to the length of time the title has to run. A freehold is more valuable than a lease for a term of years. But in this case the promised return for the investment is not only to be one hundredfold, with a title which shall run for eternity, but also this has joined with it a clause which states that everlasting life in which to personally enjoy the use of this increased estate is to go with it as an inseparable adjunct. This is indeed much. From this point of view the increase in value upon the original investment becomes not one hundredfold merely, but infinite. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 481.2}

This is qualified, however, by the surprising statement, to a worldly mind, that many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first. Then in the chapter immediately following (Matt. xx.), the explanation of this is given in the parable of the householder, who went out from time to time during the day and hired labourers for his vineyard, paying them all at the close of the day the same wages, irrespective of whether they had laboured one hour or the entire day. And when those whom he had engaged first, and who had worked the full day, murmured, he answered, “Is it not lawful for to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last; for many be called, but few chosen.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 481.3}

What does the penny a day represent? The wages of sin is death. The wages in the service of God is eternal life. Is the penny, then, eternal life? If it be so, then would it not be just that those who murmured that others received the same wages should be last, and that the last who went gladly, trusting only that they would receive that which was just, and ready to be satisfied with whatever was given them, should be first? {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 481.4}

**“Why God Waits” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

Objectors often say, “Why doesn’t the Lord, if He has the power, put a stop to evil? Why does He let it go on in the world? The objector does not stop to think that it would go hard with him if God should instantly put an end to evil. God has promised to bring sin and misery to an end, and “the Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9. Instead of finding fault with the Lord for waiting, the objector would better hasten to take advantage of God’s longsuffering and desire for his salvation; for while the Lord is longsuffering, He cannot always wait, and “the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.” Then evil will vanish away in the fires that melt the elements and purify the earth in order that it may be renewed and filled with righteousness. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 481.5}

**“‘Which Is Your Reasonable Service’” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

That was a solemn moment when Christ said to His disciples, “Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him; and the third day He shall rise again.” Matthew 20:18, 19. The twelve were all there together. Christ had even taken them apart by the wayside, that they might be alone by themselves while He first clearly stated to them in definite words the treachery which He was to meet, and the painful and ignominious death He was to die. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.1}

Yet, notwithstanding the clearness of His statement, and the impressive list of the circumstances under which it was given them, they seemed to fail utterly to comprehend it, or to appreciate in any degree its tragic and solemn import. For immediately after this, apparently, the two brothers, one of whom was the affectionate and noble disciple whom Jesus loved, with their mother, came to ask for personal preferment and power. The reply of Jesus, “Ye know not what ye ask,” was apt and expressive. Yet, notwithstanding their error in making such a request, and the fact that it could scarcely have been more ill-timed, He did not reprove them sharply. He only used the incident to illustrate to them all the difference between the administration of heavenly and of worldly affairs. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.2}

By the use of this sad misconception and the jealous anger of their fellow-disciples, He would show them, in such a manner as to impress it vividly upon their minds, that it should not be among them as in the world, “But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.” Then, striving to recall to their minds the solemn words which He had previously spoken, in warning as to what was about to befall Himself, He illustrated what their service should be by what His own had been and was to be to them,-“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.3}

**“‘What Must I Do to Be Saved?’” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

It is related that a young man came to the Master and said, “Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” Mark says that the young man came running, and kneeled to Him, and asked Him, “Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” It is evident that the youth was a man of high world position, for Luke calls him “a certain ruler.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.4}

The first words of Christ’s reply to him are very striking. It was as if He would challenge him to acknowledge Him to be the Son of God: “Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but One, that is, God.” But, seemingly, without waiting for a reply He reminded the young man that he knew the commandments of God, and that the observance of them was necessary to eternal life. Yet, apparently desiring to know if special stress should be laid upon any particular commandment, the youth asks, “Which?” Christ then enumerates to him some of the ten commandments. And he answers, “All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack yet?” Upon this, Mark says, “Then Jesus beholding him loved him.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.5}

It seems that he was a pure and noble character,-such an one as would, in these days, be considered a model Christian man. And it is true that for the beauty and purity of his life Christ loved him; yet he was not perfect. There was one thing still lacking,-that was sacrifice. This was the answer to his question:-“Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.” Mark 10:21. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.6}

This was His answer,-that loving invitation,-“Come, take up thy cross, and follow Me!” But the sacrifice which that entailed was too great, for the young man was very rich, and held high social position and authority; he was a ruler. These things he could not give up, and he turned away grieved, and very sad. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.7}

His question was, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Did Jesus answer his question? Did he point out to him the way to eternal life, for which he asked? and did the young man accept the reply, and walk in that way, or did he turn from it? Christ is the way and the life. He is the heir, and with Him and through Him alone is the inheritance of eternal life. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.8}

**“Chinese Chronology” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

Chinese Chronology .-Very often we meet the statement that the Bible cannot be true as the Chinese have records reaching back many thousands of years. The determined unbeliever will always swallow the tallest fable if it only runs contrary to the Bible, whose simple record he claims he cannot believe. It is like the giant who swallowed windmills but was at last choked by a pat of butter. Here is the explanation of this windmill of Chinese chronology:- {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.9}

“Sceptics have alleged against the Bible chronology the age of the Chinese annals. At length Professor DeLacouperie has found the key to these extravagances. The Chinese themselves were unable to make sense of their oldest books, but this eminent Frenchman has deciphered them, showing that their characters are derived from the Babylonian period in the Chinese list of mythical sovereigns he discovers a reproduction of the first Babylonian dynasty mentioned by Berosus, and in the records which accompany it, some of the facts and legends in Babylonian history. In a paper read before the Royal Asiatic Society, Professor DeLacouperie seems to set these wonderful identifications beyond doubt.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.10}

**“‘Whom Jesus Loved’” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Whom Jesus Loved.” -The first chapter of the Gospel of John, and the opening verses of the first epistle of John, bear a most interesting resemblance in thought and feeling. In the writings of this epistle the keen and intelligent natural insight of the man seems to show, as well as his affectionate and lovable qualities. Surely, through such a character as this, the inspiration of God could readily work to move mankind to an understanding of His Gospel, and a realisation of His love towards the erring and the lost. How much to-day the Lord’s work needs men of clear minds, simple expression, and loving hearts, like John. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 482.11}

**“The Promises to Israel. Israel—A Prince of God” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

Jacob had bought the birthright from Esau for a mess of pottage, and had through deceit obtained the blessing of the first-born from his father. But not by such means may anybody obtain the inheritance which God promised to Abraham and his seed. It was made sure to Abraham through faith, and no one need think to inherit it through force or fraud. “No lie is of the truth.” Truth can never be served by falsehood. The inheritance promised to Abraham and his seed was an inheritance of righteousness, and therefore it could not be gained by anything unrighteous. Earthly possessions are often gained and held by fraud, for a time, but not so the heavenly inheritance. The only thing that Jacob gained by his sharpness and deceit, was to make his brother an everlasting enemy, and to be an exile from his father’s house for more than twenty years, never again seeing his mother. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 483.1}

Yet God had said long before that Jacob should be the heir instead of his elder brother. The trouble with Jacob and his mother was that they thought they could work out the promises of God in their own way. It was the same kind of mistake that Abraham and Sarah had made. They could not wait for God to work out His own plans in His own way. Rebekah knew what God had said concerning Jacob. She heard Isaac promise the blessing to Esau, and thought that unless she interfered, the Lord’s plan would fail. She forgot that the inheritance was wholly in the Lord’s power, and that no man could have anything to do with the disposing of it, except to reject it for himself. Even though Esau had obtained the blessing from his father, God would have brought His own plan about in good time. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 483.2}

**GOD’S CHOICE**

So Jacob became doubly an exile. Not only was he a stranger in the earth, but he was a fugitive. But God did not forsake him. There was hope for him, sinful as he was. To some it may seem strange that God should thus prefer Jacob to Esau, for Jacob’s character does not at that time seem any better than Esau’s. Let us remember that God does not choose any man because of his good character. “For we also were aforetime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and His love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus 3:3-7 R.V. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 483.3}

God chooses men, not for what they are, but for what He can make of them. And there is no limit to what He can make of even the meanest and most depraved, if they are only willing, and believe His Word. A gift cannot be forced upon one, and therefore those who would receive God’s righteousness, and the inheritance of righteousness, must be willing to receive it. “All things are possible to him that believeth.” God can do “exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,” if we but believe His Word, which effectually worketh in them that believe. The Pharisees were much more respectable people than the publicans and harlots, and yet Christ said that these would go into the kingdom of heaven before they did; and the reason was that the Pharisees trusted in themselves, and disbelieved God, while the publicans and harlots believed the Lord, and yielded themselves to Him. So with Jacob and Esau. Esau was an infidel. He regarded the word of God with contempt. Jacob was no better by nature, but he believed the promise of God, which is able to make the believer a partaker of the Divine nature. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 483.4}

God chose Jacob in the same way that He does everybody else. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.” Ephesians 1:3, 4. We are chosen in Christ. And since all things were created in Christ, and in Him all things consist, it is evident that we are not required to get ourselves into Christ, but only to acknowledge Him, and abide in Him by faith. There was no more partiality in the choice of Jacob before he was born than there is in the choice of all others. The choice is not arbitrary, but in Christ, and if none rejected and spurned Christ, none would be lost. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 483.5}

*“How rich the grace! the gift how free!
’Tis only ‘ask’-it shall be given;
’Tis only ‘knock’ and thou shalt
The opening door that leads to heaven.
O then arise, and take the good,
So full and freely proffered thee,
Remembering that it cost the blood
Of Him who died on Calvary.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 483.6}*

**JACOB’S FIRST LESSON**

While Jacob believed the promise of God sufficiently to enable him to endeavor to secure its fulfillment by his own efforts, he did not understand its nature well enough to know that God alone could fulfill it through righteousness. So the Lord began to instruct him. Jacob was on his lonely way to Syria, fleeing from the wrath of his offended brother, “and he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took one of the stones1 of that place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. “And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to the will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” Genesis 28:11-17, R.V. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 483.7}

This was a great lesson for Jacob. Before this his ideas of God had been very crude. He had supposed that God was confined to one place. But now that God had appeared to him, he began to realise that “God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.” John 4:24. He began to realise what Jesus told the Samaritan woman long afterwards, that the worship of God does not depend upon any place, but upon the soul’s reaching out and finding Him, wherever it is. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 484.1}

Moreover, Jacob began to learn that the inheritance that God had promised to his fathers, and which he had thought to get by a sharp bargain, was something to be gained in an entirely different manner. How much of the lesson he grasped at this time, we cannot tell; but we know that in this revelation God proclaimed the Gospel to him. We have learned that God preached the Gospel to Abraham in the words, “In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Therefore we are sure that when the Lord said to Jacob, “In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed,” He was preaching the same Gospel. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 484.2}

Connected with this statement, was the promise of land, and of an innumerable posterity. The promise made to Jacob was identical with that made to Abraham. The blessing to come through Jacob and his seed was identical with that to come through Abraham and his seed. The seed is the same, namely, Christ and those who are His through the Spirit; and the blessing comes through the cross of Christ. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 484.3}

All this was indicated by that which Jacob saw, as well as by that which he heard. There was a ladder set up on the earth, reaching up to heaven, connecting God with man. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the connecting link between heaven and earth, between God and man. The ladder connecting heaven with earth, upon which the angels of God were ascending and descending, was a representation of that which Christ said to Nathanael, that true Israelite: “Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” John 1:51. The way to heaven is the way of the cross, and this is that which was indicated to Jacob that night. Not by self-assertion, but by self-denial, are the inheritance and the blessing to be gained. “He that will lose his life,” and all that life contains, “shall save it.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 484.4}

**APPLYING THE LESSON**

Of Jacob’s sojourn in the land of Syria, we need not speak particularly. In the twenty years that he served his uncle Laban, he had ample opportunity to learn that deception and sharp dealing do not profit. The course that he had pursued came back upon himself; but God was with him, and prospered him. Jacob seems to have laid to heart the lesson that had been given him, for we see very little indication of his natural disposition to overreach in his dealing with his uncle. He seems to have trusted his case quite fully to the Lord, and to have submitted to all manner of ill-treatment without retaliation. In his reply to Laban’s charge that he had stolen, Jacob said:- {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 484.5}

“This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts, I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Thus have I been twenty years in thine house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle; and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.” Genesis 31:38-42. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 484.6}

This was a calm and dignified statement, and showed that the fear of Isaac, and the same spirit, had actuated him. The preaching of the Gospel had not been in vain in Jacob’s case; a great change had come over him. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 484.7}

Let it be noted here that Jacob gained nothing whatever from the birthright which he had so shrewdly bought from his brother. His property was due to the direct blessing of God. And in this connection we may recall the fact that Isaac’s blessing was to the effect that God would bless him. The inheritance was not one which could be transmitted from father to son, as ordinary inheritances, but one which must be to each one by the direct, personal promise and blessing of God. To be “Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise,” we must be Christ’s; but if we are Christ’s, and joint-heirs with Him, we are “heirs of God.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 484.8}

**THE FINAL TEST**

But Jacob had made a grievous failure in his earlier life, and so God as a faithful Teacher, must necessarily bring him over the same ground again. He had thought to win by guile: he must completely learn that “this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” 1 John 5:4. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 484.9}

When Rebekah proposed to send Jacob away from home, because Esau sought to kill him, she said, “Now therefore, my son obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran; and tarry with him a few days, until thy brother’s fury turn away; until thy brother’s anger turn from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him; then will I send and fetch thee from thence.” Genesis 27:43-45. But she did not know the nature of Esau. He was bitter and unrelenting. “Thus saith the Lord. For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever.” Amos 1:11. (Edom is Esau. See Genesis 25:30; 36:1.) Here we see that, bad as Jacob’s natural disposition was, Esau’s character was most despicable. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 484.10}

Although twenty years had passed, Esau’s anger was as fresh as ever. When Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau, to speak peaceably to him, and to conciliate him, they brought back the news that Esau was coming with four hundred men. Jacob could not hope to make any stand against these trained warriors; but he had learned to trust in the Lord, and so we find him pleading the promises in this manner:- {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 485.1}

“O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee; I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray Thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.” Genesis 32:9-12. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 485.2}

Jacob had once tried to get the better of his brother by fraud. He had thought that thus he could become an heir of the promise of God. Now he had learned that it could be gained only by faith, and he betook himself to prayer in order to be delivered from the wrath of his brother. Having made the best possible disposition of his family and flocks, he remained alone to continue his prayer to God. He realised that he was not worthy of anything, and that if left to his deserts he should perish, and he felt that he must still further cast himself upon the mercy of God. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 485.3}

“And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when He saw that He prevailed not against him, He touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with Him. And He said, Let Me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me. And He said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with man, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked Him and said, Tell me, I pray Thee, Thy name. And He said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after My name? And He blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.” Genesis 32:24-30. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 485.4}

People often speak of wrestling with God in prayer, as Jacob did. There is no evidence that Jacob knew that it was the Lord that was wrestling with him, until the morning broke, and his thigh was put out of joint by the touch of his antagonist. Indeed, we very well know that no man would have the hardihood to engage in a contest of strength with the Lord, if he knew Him to be the Lord. The angel appeared to him as a man, and Jacob doubtless thought that he was being attacked by a robber. We can well conceive that Jacob was in sore trouble all night. The time was fast approaching when he must face his angry brother, and he dared not meet him without the full assurance that all was right between himself and God. He must know that he was pardoned for his past wicked course. Yet the hours that he had designed to spend in communing with God, were being spent in wrestling with a supposed enemy. So we may be sure that while his strength was all engaged in resisting his antagonist, his heart was uplifted to God in bitter anguish. The suspense and anxiety of that night must have been terrible. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 485.5}

Jacob was a man of great physical power and endurance. Watching the flocks night and day for years had demonstrated this, and had, at the same time hardened his frame. So he continued the struggle, and held his ground all night. But it was not thus that he gained the victory. We read that “by his strength he had power with God; yea, he had power, over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto Him; he found Him in Bethel, and there He spake with us; even the Lord of hosts; the Lord is His memorial.” Hosea 12:3-5. By his power Jacob prevailed with God, but it was not by his power and skill as a wrestler. His strength, was in his weakness, as we shall see. Notice that the first intimation that Jacob had that his opponent was other than an ordinary man, was when his thigh was put out of joint by the Divine touch. That revealed in an instant who his supposed enemy was. It was no human touch, but the hand of the Lord that he felt. What did he then do? What could a man do in his condition? Picture to yourself a man wrestling, where so much depends upon the strength of his legs, and having one of them suddenly dislocated. Even if he were merely walking, or simply standing still, and one of his legs should suddenly be put out of joint, he would instantly fall to the ground. Much more would he fall if he were wrestling. Such would have been the case with Jacob, if he had not at once thrown himself upon the Lord, with a firm grasp. He would most naturally grasp the nearest object for support; but the knowledge that here was the One whom he had been longing to meet, would make his grasp more than an involuntary action. His opportunity had come, and he would not let it slip. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 485.6}

That Jacob did at once cease wrestling, and cling to the Lord, is not only most apparent from the fact that he could do nothing else, but also from the words of the Lord, “Let Me go.” “No,” said Jacob. “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” It was a case of life and death. His life and salvation depended upon his holding on to the Lord. The words, “Let Me go,” were only to test him, for the Lord does not willingly leave any man. But Jacob was determined to find a blessing indeed, and he prevailed. It was by his strength that he prevailed, but it was by the strength of faith. “When I am weak, then am I strong.” In that hour Jacob fully learned the lesson that the blessing and the inheritance come not by might, nor by strength, but by the Spirit of the Lord. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 486.1}

**A NEW NAME**

The new name was a pledge to Jacob that he was accepted. It did not confer anything upon him, but was a token of what he had already gained. Resting upon God, he had ceased from his own works, so that he was no more the supplanter, seeking to further his own ends, but the prince of God, who had fought the good fight of faith, and had laid hold on eternal life. As Israel he was henceforth to be known. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 486.2}

Now he could go forth to meet his brother. He who has seen God face to face has no need to fear the face of man. He who has power with God, will most certainly prevail with men. This is the secret of power. Let the servant of God know that if he would have power with men he must first be able to prevail with God. He must know the Lord, and have talked with Him face to face. To such the Lord says, “I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.” Luke 21:15. Stephen knew the Lord, and held communion with Him, and the haters of truth “were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake.” What then must have been his power with those whose hearts were open to receive the truth? {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 486.3}

In this story of Jacob, we learn anew how the inheritance which God promised to Abraham and to his seed is to be obtained. It is by faith alone. Repentance and faith are the only means of deliverance. By no other means could he hope to have any share in the inheritance. His whole salvation lay in his dependence upon the promise of God. It was thus that he was fully made partaker of the Divine nature. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 486.4}

**WHO ARE ISRAELITES?**

We learn also who are Israel. The name was given to Jacob in token of the victory which he had gained by faith. It did not bestow any grace upon him, but was a token of grace already possessed. So it will be bestowed upon all those who through faith overcome, and upon no others. To be called an Israelite does not add anything to anybody. It is not the name that brings the blessing, but the blessing that brings the name. As Jacob did not possess the name by nature, so nobody else can. The true Israelite is he in whom is no guile. Such ones alone please God; but “without faith it is impossible to please Him.” So the Israelite is only the one who has personal faith in the Lord. “They are not all Israel, which are of Israel;” “but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” Romans 9:6, 8. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 486.5}

Let every one who would fain be known as an Israelite consider how Jacob received the name, and realise that only so can it be worthily carried by anyone. Christ, as the promised seed, had to go through the same struggle. He fought and won through His trust in the word of the Father, and so He is of right the King of Israel. Only Israelites will share the kingdom with Him; for Israelites are overcomers, and the promise is, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His Throne.” Revelation 3:21. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 486.6}

**“Prayers for the Dead and Sunday Observance” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

At the late annual meeting of the English Church Union the special subjects discussed was that of prayers for the dead, and the Union strongly urged that this custom should be more fully recognised in the services of the Church of England. To this all Protestants are, of course, strenuously opposed. Prayers for the dead, associated with offerings for the dead, known in Catholic phraseology as masses for the dead, come from the ancient pagan custom of sacrificing for the dead and the worshipping of demons, against which the Scriptures specifically warns all. But it is not of the doctrine itself that we shall speak, but of the argument by which those who urge it silence the objections of those in the Church of England, and Protestants generally, who oppose it. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 486.7}

Protestants say that the practice is without Scripture warrant, founded merely on tradition which has always made void the Word. It is so, and the objection is unanswerable. But those who favour prayers for the dead do not take the Scriptures as authority so much as ecclesiastical tradition. They adopt the Catholic position. But then they turn on their objectors and retort that Protestants, while pleading for the Word as the standard, themselves reject the Word and take tradition when it so pleases them. The Dean of Lichfield, Dr. Lucock, in his speech at the meeting of the E.C.U., replied to the Protestant controversialist as follows:- {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 486.8}

Just because there is no direct evidence in so many words in Holy Scripture enjoining prayers for the dead, he maintains that as members of the Reformed Church, believing Scripture and Scripture alone, we have no right to revive them. I want to point out to you what inconsistency is involved in this position. Take the case of Sunday as an illustration. There is not a single text in the whole Bible which teaches us in so many words that the seventh day was to be superseded by the first. It is perfectly true that in the New Testament we find religious associations connected with the first day. But if there was a single text directing the change we should not have found in certain portions of the Church in the early centuries both the seventh and the first day observed. In justifying the change, we appeal to the Primitive Church, being perfectly certain that the rulers and Bishops of the Church would never have sanctioned such a revolution as that unless they had received by tradition such directions as they believed to have, from our blessed Lord Himself. What, then, is the rule of authority in the one case must be made the rule in the other. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 486.9}

The Church Times endorses the Dean’s argument editorially, saying, “No distinct direction is given in the Gospel for the observance of the first day of the week in lieu of the Sabbath.” This of course is not a matter of argument. It is a matter of fact. The argument based upon the facts simply amounts to saying, “There is no Scripture for prayers for the dead, neither is there for Sunday keeping; but we do both according to the primitive tradition, which we follow instead of the Word.” The answer silences the Protestant who finds himself keeping the Sunday and refusing prayers for the dead, which practice comes on the same authority as Sunday observance. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 487.1}

It is a fact, everywhere made prominent in ecclesiastical history, that what is called primitive tradition begins after the “falling away” of which the Apostle Paul warned the early church. The apostasy had already begun to work in his day, he told them, and immediately after the days of the apostles the errors which crowd the Roman Church came in as a flood. As Dr. Killen says in his preface to the “Ancient Church“:- {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 487.2}

Rites and ceremonies, of which neither Paul nor Peter ever heard, crept silently into use, and then claimed the rank of Divine institutions. Officers, for whom the primitive disciples could have found no place, and titles, which to them would have been altogether unintelligible, began to challenge attention, and to be named apostolic. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 487.3}

It is to these times that men appeal whenever they appeal to primitive tradition in support of doctrines and practices for which they find no warrant in the Scripture. And it is interesting, in this special connection, to note the fact that in the earliest times prayers for the dead, or offerings for the dead, and Sunday observance were associated together. In accounting for these practices, the matter of observing the Sunday, offerings for the dead, and the sign of the cross, Tertullian, who wrote about the year 200, said:- {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 487.4}

If for these and other such rules, you insist upon having positive Scripture injunction, you will find none. Tradition will be held forth to you as the originator of them, custom as their strengthener, and faith as their observer. That reason will support tradition, and custom, and faith, you will either yourself perceive, or learn from some one who has. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 487.5}

That was all that could be said for these practices then, and it is all that can be said for them now. But the retort that silences those who cling to one of Scripture practice and object to another, based on the same authority and associated with it in origin, will not silence the protests of those who take the Bible as God’s Word to men, and test all of these perversions of the truth and adaptations of ancient pagan rites and observances by “the law and the testimony.” By this test is seen that “there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 487.6}

Notice how generally this question of the authority of Sunday is being made the test of the authority of the Church aside from the Word. It was on this point that the Council of Trent based its condemnation of the Reformers’ appeal to the Bible alone, as against Church authority. It is just here that the Church of Rome is constantly charging the Protestant world with inconsistency in accepting Sunday observance by authority of the Church, while rejecting that authority in other matters where it pleases them to do so. And the Anglican Catholics are also learning the weak spot in the armour of popular Protestantism. This is why we cannot do otherwise than continually call attention to the Sabbath question. On the side of human authority the Sunday is being made the test and the mark of such authority. On the side of Divine authority and the Word of God the Sabbath is the sign or mark of allegiance to God. Ezekiel 20:12, 20. The issue is joined. It is the Word of God against the word of man. On which side will you choose to stand? {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 487.7}

**“Strikes” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

Strikes .-Strikes are not only becoming more frequent in the industrial world, but violence is more frequently resorted to in conducting them. Such contests, attended with violence, necessitating the calling out of troops have recently been reported from the Continent, England, and America. The inequalities of social life, with increase of both riches and wretchedness, are being more keenly felt, and men seem to have less patience to endure. There are often two sides to these labour disputes, but the Scripture gives advice to the Christian labourer which is equally good whether it is the covetousness of the employer or of the employed, or both, which leads to bad feeling and a struggle on each side to overcome the other. The prophet warns the rich in these days who have “heaped treasure together for the last days” by keeping back the hire of the labourer. James 5 But anticipating the violence to which these things would lead, the prophet says to the Christian, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” It is incompatible with the character of the Christian servant to fight even for that which may be rightfully due, and as injustice increases and is met by increasing violence on the part of the oppressed, the Christian is to stand apart from strife and wait patiently for the grand event which is to bring oppression to an end and right all wrong for ever. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 487.8}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

-Native risings are reported from Formosa. The Japanese are said to be hard pressed. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.1}

-A boundary dispute between Chili and Argentina is to be arbitrated by Queen Victoria in case of necessity. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.2}

-The Young Men’s Christian Associations own buildings and other real estate to the value of ?3,600,000. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.3}

-Appeals are being made for funds in relief of Cretans, both Christian and Moslem, who are suffering by the insurrection there. Both seem to have suffered equally, one side being as savage as the other. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.4}

-Mount Vesuvius continues active, considerable streams of lava flowing down. Mauna Loa, in the Sandwich Islands, is again throwing out great quantities of molten rock after a long period of inactivity. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.5}

-The University of Jena has conferred the honorary Degree of Medicine upon Prince Bismarck. He also holds the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Law, Doctor of Biblical Science and Doctor of Theology. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.6}

-On the first Sunday that all the London museums were thrown open they were visited by 10,650 persons. Of these, 2,437 went to the National Gallery, 3,173 to the South Kensington Museum, and 1,644 to the British Museum. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.7}

-Teheran, the Persian capital is held by troops called Cossacks and officered by Russians. Russia dictates Persian policy, and the new Shah is more Russian than his father in his sympathies. It is said that northern Persia is Russian in all but name. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.8}

-A French expedition for the Upper Nile region is said to be working its way from the Congo regions. Doubtless this is one reason why the advance on Dongola was planned. Central Africa still belongs to the first one who can get it, and all the powers are after it. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.9}

-An ordinance prohibiting the opening of public-houses within two hundred feet of a building occupied for school purposes has been passed by the City Council of New York, and upheld by the courts. It is said that this will necessitate the closing of at least five hundred public-houses. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.10}

-The value and importance of the commerce of the great lakes of North America is shown by the fact that Cleveland, Ohio, is the second greatest ship-building port of the world, the Clyde being first, and that the traffic through the ship canal at Sault St. Marie is greater than that of the Suez Canal. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.11}

-The Pope advised members of Parliament that the Deceased Wife’s Sister’s Bill was not agreeable to him, and now we hear that it is to be dropped. In the United States the party platform upon which the late Republican nomination for the presidency was made, as at first drafted, contained a clause against the appropriation of public money for sectarian uses. Archbishop Ireland objected and the clause was expunged. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 494.12}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

A leaflet on foreign missions states that 40,000,000 people in Great Britain have one preacher to every 1,000. But 1,000,000 heathen have but one foreign missionary to every 200,000 souls. The average contributions of members of churches in England for foreign missions is 1? d. per month. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.1}

A certain church committee were discussing how they could best raise some necessary funds for church repairs. A satirical elder said: “And now, brethren, let us get up a supper and eat ourselves rich. Buy your food, then give it to the church. Then go buy it back again. Then eat it up, and your church debt is paid.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.2}

A missionary, riding home from Madagascar, says that under the rule of the French many material improvements are being made in the capital and the island generally. But “there are evils which seem inseparable from the presence of a large number of soldiers of whatever nationality. There is a great increase of drinking among the Malagasy, as well as of licentiousness.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.3}

A barber of Sheffield has been fined five shillings under the Lord’s Day Observance Act, for carrying on his business on Sundays. The action was brought by a local hairdressers’ association for the purpose of compelling the acceptance of the time of work agreed upon by the association. An appeal was taken to a higher court. In the same town a milkman was convicted for publicly crying milk for sale on Sunday. The old law still has vitality enough, and the disposition to use it is being manifested more than formerly. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.4}

Not only in Armenia and Crete is the Eastern Question raised by violence and outrage on the part of both Muslims and “Christians,” but now the Macedonian frontier is ablaze, and a troop of Greeks has destroyed a company of Turkish troops in that region. It is for every Christian to pray that the winds of strife may be held in check until the message of the everlasting Gospel is brought to those who are waiting for it in these regions. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.5}

Forty villages are said to have been destroyed in the late disturbances in the region of Van. Even correspondents whose attitude is consistently hostile to the Turkish Government say that there is no doubt the Armenian revolutionists precipitated the conflict. When will the churches of Christendom learn that when they magnify into a virtue political revolution, and breathe out nothing but the spirit of hatred and violence against the Turkish Government, they are taking a terrible responsibility for the loss of life-the innocent suffering with the guilty-which accompanies political insurrection in Turkey. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.6}

A newspaper, commenting on the need of such work as Dr. Bernardo is doing for the children of the streets, says: “In London there are generally about 100,000 persons living in open profligacy, 20,000 professed beggars, 3,000 receivers of stolen goods, 20,000 children living in destitution and sin; 12,000 children living under regular training for vice; 30,000 thieves. It is heart-breaking to think of the misery and crime in London. But the picture is not all dark. Owing to the work of men animated with the spirit of Christ, there are spots of blue.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.7}

The Society of Christian Endeavour, which has a large membership here and is said to number nearly three millions in the United States has had an international meeting in Washington. With much zeal in truly Christian endeavour it is much to be regretted that it is being drawn in the direction of political reform, expecting to advance religion by political methods. It is the temptation which comes with numbers-the hope of securing the kingdoms of this world by some easier way than the Cross. When Jesus was tempted in this way He chose the Cross, and that is the only way of salvation. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.8}

**“Rooted in Him” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

Rooted in Him .-The reason why many are not “rooted and built up in Him,” is that they do not abide in Him sufficiently long to get rooted. No plant will root itself firmly in the soil if it is pulled up every day. Just so many who think they want to be rooted in Christ, are variable and changeable, here and there, never settled and established in the truth, and do not abide in Him so that they may be rooted in Him. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.9}

**“Getting the Preciousness” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

Getting the Preciousness .-The Revised Version brings out the thought in 1 Peter 2:7 very clearly: “For you therefore which believe is the preciousness.” God has given exceeding great and precious promises, but the preciousness of the gift of God is only for those who believe. The way and the service of God seem dull and barren to the unbeliever; he cannot see the joy there is in God. Of course he cannot see what is in the promises of God, because he does not take it. He does not taste and see that the Lord is good, but stands without, fearing to let go of the hollowness of life for fear the Lord has nothing good for him. What a mistake to stand afar off and refuse to enter in, or to follow so slavishly and unbelievingly that one gets only the hardness of the way, and the crosses, without the life and power of the cross! Unto those that believe is the preciousness. No one ever yet ventured their all upon the promises of God without finding them precious indeed, “exceeding great and precious.” {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.10}

**“By What Life?” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

By What Life? -By what life are we saved?-By the life of Christ, and He has but one. Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday, and to-day and for ever.” Hebrews 13:8. It is by His present life that we are saved, that is, by His life in us from day to day. But the life which He now lives is the very same life that He lived in Judea eighteen hundred years ago. He took again the same life that He laid down. Think what was in the life of Christ, as we have the record in the New Testament, and we shall know what ought to be in our lives now. If we allow Him to dwell in us, He will live just as He did then. If there is that in our lives that was not in His then, we may be sure that He is not living it in us now. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.11}

**“Russian Censorship” The Present Truth, 12, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

Russian Censorship .-The infinite pains taken by officials in Russia in shutting out what they regard as heresy is something wonderful. Even the PRESENT TRUTH does not escape. A reader in St. Petersburg a few weeks ago received the paper with a portion cut out by the censor’s scissors, and other portions blacked out with ink. It is a very common thing for newspapers to be thus dealt with for their political criticisms, but when the shortest of notes in a religious journal are detected and obliterated, it shows how close is the scrutiny of the officials. {PTUK July 30, 1896, p. 496.12}