**“A Sign of the End” The Present Truth, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

In giving some of the signs by which men might know of the nearness of His second coming and be led to prepare for it, Jesus said: “And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences.” Of all these catastrophes the earthquake strikes greatest terror to the heart that does not know of a more enduring foundation than the earth. The quaking, reeling earth, as the end draws near, will more and more plainly warn men to put their trust in things that cannot be shaken. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 753.1}

Men may lightly say that there have always been earthquakes; but the fact remains that the Lord tells us to look upon their increase as a sign of the times. This increase must go on until that last great earthquake when the cities of the nations fall, and the scoffs of scoffers turn to wailings. Then they will cry, “The great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” Revelation 6:17. The Gospel supplies the answer now: “The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” He is a happy man who learns now by experience that the Word of God, His promises and His commands, are able actually to support him and hold him up. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 753.2}

One of the most destructive of modern earthquakes was that shown in the cut, at Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, in 1755, in which 60,000 people perished. Lisbon still bears the marks of the visitation. Another equally destructive of human life visited Italy a few years later. And in the present century there has been a great increase in the number of these shocks. They are more carefully reported now than formerly, but a scientific investigator only recently commented on the increase during so short a period as the last ten years. In last month’s Quiver magazine, Rev. W. Preston, D.D., called attention to this increase and its significance in an article from which we quote the following:— {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 753.3}

“Previous to Christ’s first advent only fifty-eight earthquakes can be counted during a period of 1,700 years. Coming to later times we find the historian recording thirty-five disastrous ones occurring between 1800 and 1565. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 754.1}

“According to the researches of Mallet there have been 2,136 earthquakes in Western Europe alone since the beginning of the Christian era. In this country there were 356 shocks experienced between 1700 and 1844. The year 1568 was a remarkable one for earthquakes. It opened with an awful one at Formosa, which destroyed 30,000 human beings. Upwards of 200 great earthquakes are recorded as having taken place between October, 1,867, and January, 1869. Since that period tokens of the end have not been wanting. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 754.2}

“During the present year the voice of Nature has not been dumb.... Not a month has gone by but an earthquake shock has been experienced in some quarter. Reports have come to us from the United States and from Canada respecting them. In Iceland they have been the greatest ever known. In May Peru was visited; and in the Leeward Islands there was great damage done and many lives were lost. Shortly after I left Cairo there was a severe shock, whereby the largest buildings were shaken. During the same month Rome was visited; shocks were also felt in the West Indies, and later on in the northern part of the American continent, while in the southern portion of Australia ninety shocks were experienced during three days. England also had a visitation. And then we have the recent calamitous earthquake at Calcutta, which wrought such disaster over a vast area ... {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 754.3}

“Was there ever a time in the memory of man when were concentrated so many ‘earthquakes in divers places’ in a limited portion of one year, as have been since the opening of this year of grace 1897 til now. All over the globe, as if by combined conspiracy, there has been havoc, disaster and death. Such signs and omens will make thoughtful men learn wisdom.... Bold scoffers ask, ‘Where is the promise of His coming?’ The dread earthquake replies, and through it the Almighty warns, ‘Lo, I come quickly.’ God speaks: let man attend. These great and universal earthquakes, certainly unprecedented in their number, are but the footfall, the forerunners of the coming of the Lord.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 754.4}

**“That Demon Militarism” The Present Truth, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

The spirit of that demon militarism is working all about the Empice. Now it is the editor of the Canadian Magazine urging that in Canada “every able-bodied male between twenty-one and twenty-six years of age should he compelled to drill in a militia corps for at least twelve days in every year.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 754.5}

**“Lessons From the Book of Hebrews. Christ the Sympathetic Priest” The Present Truth, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

Our last lesson, the closing portion of the fourth chapter of Hebrews introduced us to Christ as our High Priest who, although in the heavens on the right hand of the Majesty, is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, so that we may come boldly unto the throne of grace, assured that we shall obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. In the following verses the apostle gives us further assurance of Christ’s oneness with us, from which we are to derive comfort and encouragement. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 754.6}

“For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts wd sacrifices for sins; who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he also himself is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honour to himself, but he, that is called of God, as was Aaron, So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest, but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. As He saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek. Who in the days of His flesh when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; though He were a Son, ye learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him; called of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedek. Of whom we have man, things to say, and hard to he uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat [R.V., solid food.] For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat [solid food] belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” Hebrews 5:1-14. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 754.7}

This is a most important portion of Scripture, for it deals with the very heart and soul of the Gospel. It reveals the secret of Christian living and victory. It brings Christ to us in the closest fellowship, as the sympathising friend and companion who, while knowing from experience all the weaknesses of the flesh, and therefore kindly sympathising with those who are in sin, hath all power to deliver. Because it deals with the vital, practical part of Christianity, the enemy of souls has sought to envelop it in a fog, and the consequence is that the real truth concerning Christ is by many professed Christians counted as heresy. The whole trouble, however, lies in not taking the Scripture literally at its own word. Let us therefore question it closely, that we may be the better able to study it with true reverence. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 754.8}

**QUESTIONS ON THE TEXT**

For what is every high priest taken from among men ordained or appointed? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.1}

“That he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.2}

What kind of person must an high priest necessarily be? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.3}

One “who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.4}

How can he have compassion on such? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.5}

“For that he also himself is compassed with infirmity.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.6}

Since the priest must necessarily be one who is compassed with infirmity, what must he therefore do? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.7}

“He ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.8}

Can a man raise himself to this office? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.9}

“No man taketh this honour to himself.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.10}

Who only can do the work of priest? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.11}

“He that is called of God, as was Aaron.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.12}

How did Christ show His fitness for the position? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.13}

“Christ glorified not Himself High Priest.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.14}

Who set Him apart to that office? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.15}

“He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.16}

What positive declaration did God also make to Christ? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.17}

“Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.18}

What did Christ do in the days of His flesh? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.19}

“Offered up prayers and supplications.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.20}

What showed that these prayers and supplications were not mere prayers of ceremony? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.21}

He offered up prayers and supplications “with strong crying and tears.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.22}

To whom did He offer these earnest petitions? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.23}

“Unto Him that was able to save Him from death.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.24}

What was it then from which He prayed with such agony of soul to be saved? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.25}

“From death.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.26}

Was His prayer answered? He “was heard in that He feared.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.27}

What was Christ all the time? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.28}

“A Son.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.29}

What did He nevertheless learn? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.30}

“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.31}

How did He learn obedience? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.32}

“By the things which He suffered.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.33}

When did He learn obedience by the things which He suffered? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.34}

“In the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.35}

What did He therefore become? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.36}

“The Author of eternal salvation.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.37}

To whom? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.38}

“Unto all them that obey Him.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.39}

When did He become the Author of eternal salvation to all that obey Him? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.40}

“Being made perfect.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.41}

What was He called-of God to be? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.42}

“Called of God an High Priest.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.43}

After what order? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.44}

“After the order of Melchisedek.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.45}

Is this great truth all that there is to be said of Christ? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.46}

“We have many things to say, and hard to be uttered.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.47}

Why is it so difficult to set forth the whole truth? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.48}

“Seeing ye are dull of hearing.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.49}

How dull? {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.50}

“When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.51}

The Work of an High Priest .—The office of high priest is no different in kind, but only in degree, from that of ordinary priests. All the people of God are priests (1 Peter 2:9) deriving their priesthood, as their life, from Christ the Head. Verses 4, 5. Therefore in the work and character of our great High Priest we learn what should be the work and character of all His followers. Every high priest “is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.” “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:5. So in Malachi 2:6, we read of Jesus Christ: “The law of truth was in His mouth, and iniquity was not found in His lips; He walked with Me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.” Therefore is given the general rule: “For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.” Verse 7. The work of high priest, as of all priests, is to make reconciliation for sins, by presenting righteousness. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and now Christ has committed to us in His stead the ministry of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.52}

The Qualifications of High Priest .—He must be taken from among men, since his work is for them. He must be one “who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.” God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, “not imputing their trespasses unto them.” He was not condemning, but pitying. Harshness repels, love draws. That is how God draws men to Himself. “I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” Jeremiah 31:3. But the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man” (Titus 3:1) appeared in Christ; for “God commended His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:5. Therefore Christ said: “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.” John 12:32. It is the goodness of God, that leads men to repentance. Romans 2:1. The word goodness as applied to God, means all that anybody means by goodness, and much more. It means more than what is ordinarily thought of as strict conformity to the law of right; it means kindness, benevolence, pity, sympathy, forbearance. These are the qualities by which God draws men to Himself. No others can attract. All these are manifested in Christ. “God was is Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” 2 Corinthians 5:19. “Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more.” “This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.” Luke 15:2. “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Luke 13:34. Peter denied his Lord with cursing in the hour of His sorest need; “and the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.” Luke 22:61. That look melted Peter, and made a new man of him. Oh, what gentleness and tenderness toward frail sinners was manifested in Christ! {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.53}

“Learn of Me.” -“Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.” Matthew 11:29. “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2. Christ the High Priest is the example to the under priests. “Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32. Nothing but love can by any possibility win an erring one, and yet professed followers of Christ, who are active and full of zeal in what is called Gospel work, often manifest impatience and even bitterness toward those who through weakness or ignorance wander out of the way. And what would seem most strange, if we did not know the wickedness of the human heart, this harshness, and lack of sympathy is often manifested to the most marked degree toward those who have the most claim on our love. Why is this?—Simply because the errors and frailties of those nearest to us are more likely to affect us personally than are the sins of others, and we find that our Christianity does not go to the extent of forgiving sins committed against us. We can quite readily deal gently with the sinner, so long as we regard the sin as only against God; but when it comes to us personally, that is quite another matter. We love ourselves more than we love God, and so of course much more than we love another person, even our nearest friends. No one can be sure that he loves his friends, until they fall into sin, and into such sin as touches him personally. When that occurs it is too often made evident that the supposed love for others was only self-love. Their ease is disturbed, feelings are ruffled, their pride is touched, their self-love is wounded, and instead of pitying the erring ones, they pity themselves, and so drive the sinner farther away. When love is most needed, then is the least shown. But that is not Christ. Oh, that men and women who bear the name of Christ would learn that He has compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way! {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 755.54}

“To Make Reconciliation.” -The subject is too vitally important to be left here. The lesson ought to be impressed on every heart. The work of priest is to effect reconciliation. Of Christ it is said that “in all things it behoved Him; to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” Hebrews 2:17. “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” Note, reconciling, not creating or increasing enmity. Not even imputing their trespasses unto them, much less upbraiding them or turning the cold shoulder to them for their trespasses. A person may be cowed, but never reconciled, by harsh words or blows, or by surliness. No man ever yet made a friend by acting unfriendly. Christ’s work as High Priest is to make reconciliation, to win; if we are not doing the same, we are not associated with Him in His priestly work; and if we are not priests of God, then we are not among His chosen people. It is very evident that we all have need to learn much in “the first principles of the oracles of God.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 756.1}

The Secret of Sympathy .—The true priest can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way. “for that he also himself is compassed with infirmity.” No one can sympathise with a sufferer except one who feels the same pain, or at least has a vivid recollection of it. That is what the word itself means. “Sympathy” is made up of two Greek words, which mean, “to suffer with.” The word “compassion” has the same meaning, being formed from two Latin words. The only reason why the priest ordained of God has compassion on the ignorant and the erring, is because he himself has the same infirmities. People often mistake pity for sympathy or compassion. Pity may be expressed in words, but sympathy shares the burden. If one is staggering under a heavy load, the sympathiser gets beneath the load and helps bear it. This is true even of heart burdens. If one has lost a friend, a grasp of the hand, or a few words, or anything else done as only one who has lost a friend knows how to do, eases the pain. The true priest of God has kindly compassion for the sinner, because he knows his own frailty. “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 756.2}

Taken from Among Men .—This is why the priest who is to make reconciliation for the sins of the people must be taken from among men; for only men have sinned. The angels in heaven have not sinned, therefore the work of preaching the Gospel could not be committed to them. They could not put themselves in our place. But the pitiful part is, that even fallen men lift themselves up so high in their own estimation that they forget that they are sinners like others, and so act as though they were not men but gods. Men who are hard in their treatment of the erring, who thrust them back instead of drawing them with sympathy, show that they do not recognise that they are equally weak and erring, and that if they have not actually committed the same sin, it is only because of different circumstances. “All have sinned,“ “there is no difference,“ “Man at his best state is altogether vanity.” He who remembers this, will never cause another to stumble. How much we need continually to be put in mind that we are but men. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 756.3}

The Man Christ Jesus .—All these qualifications of a high priest are found in Christ, and in Him alone in their fulness. He was taken from among men. Read Deuteronomy 18:18: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among the brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth.” Raised up from among His brethren, yet in all things “like unto His brethren.” So also Ps. lxxxix: “Then Thou spakest in vision to Thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon One that is mighty; I have exalted One chosen out of the people.” “The Word was made flesh” and thus bore all the sins and infirmities of the flesh. “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” Matthew 8:17. “Tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.” “He Himself also is compassed with infirmity,“ because He is still in the flesh (“in thy mouth and in thy heart.” Romans 10:8), and feels everything that mankind feels; and this is true not merely of mankind in general, but of each individual. He is still “the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5), and is therefore the Mediator. Judgment is committed to Him, “because He is the Son of man.” John 5:27. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 756.4}

Upon the expression, “By reason hereof,“ that is, of being compassed with infirmity, “He ought, as for the people, so also for Himself, to offer for sins,“ much might be said, but it is perhaps better to leave it to the reader’s meditation. There are truths of God which it is not lawful for men to utter. It is impossible for human mind to grasp the depth of the truth of Christ’s Divinity and humanity. One thing must not be forgotten, and that is that there is as much the mystery of God in the humanity of Christ as in His Divinity. He was faultless; no taint of sin ever defiled Him, yet He was in the flesh, “sinful flesh.” So He insisted on being baptized, for said He, “thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” Matthew 3:15. So He made an offering for His own sins, and in that an offering for the sins of all the people, for it was the sins of the people that He made His own, God was in Christ, not imputing the trespasses of the people unto them, but assuming all the responsibility of them Himself, as though He Himself had committed them. The Just suffered for the unjust; for in His suffering the justice of God is revealed. Romans 3:26. This was because He was man in every sense of the word, having in Himself, although sinless, all the frailties of mankind. So closely has He identified Himself with us. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 756.5}

The tendency is to minimise the humanity of Christ, as though thereby His Divinity could be exalted. It is the devil who has been instrumental in leading the minds away from Jesus as man, because the more Christ is regarded as remote from us, and out of touch with humanity, the less He is treated as a Saviour. In losing sight of the humanity of Jesus-His oneness with mankind,-men have not, as they thought, exalted His Divinity, but just the contrary; for the Word that was, in the beginning with God, and which was God, is revealed to us only as “made flesh.” To ignore the humanity of Christ is therefore to deny His Divinity. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 757.1}

Praying to Be Saved .—This same Jesus who was the only begotten Son of God, and also Priest after the order of Melchisedek, “in the days of His flesh” “offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death.” Think of it! The Son of God praying in agony to be saved from death. Dare anyone even remotely suggest that this was only a sort of acting, and that there was no real danger? No; there was no guile in His mouth. He is the Truth itself. He did nothing simply for effect or show. The fact that He prayed, shows that there was need of prayer; and the fact that He prayed with strong crying and tears, shows that the need was urgent. Jesus had voluntarily, for our sakes, put Himself in a place of danger,-where there was danger of death,-and from this He prayed with anguish to be delivered. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 757.2}

The Sting of Death .—“The sting of death is sin.” “Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.” Death cannot harm one in whom is no sin. Where there is no sin, there is no danger of death. Therefore that which Jesus really prayed to be saved from was sin, for only in being saved from sin could He be saved from death. He was in the flesh as helpless as we, for He said, “I can of Mine own self do nothing” (John 5:30) yet all our sins were upon Him. His only help lay in God. Read again the twenty-second Psalm, and see, how He trusted in God for deliverance. Also Isaiah 50:7, 8. “For the Lord God will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth Me.” Or Psalm 16:8, 9: “I have set the Lord always before Me; because He is at My right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore My heart is glad and My glory rejoiceth; My flesh also shall rest in hope.” His hope in death was that He had been saved from sin. Mark this: it is not that He had ever committed sin, and that He was saved from its consequences, but that He had all the sins of humanity in His flesh, and was saved from their dominion. Not once did they master Him. Not for an instant did He yield to their power. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 757.3}

Saved from Death .—He “was heard in that He feared,“ or “for His godly fear.” In what was He heard?—In His prayer to be saved from death. “But He died, nevertheless,“ you say. Yes, but He was not overcome by death; He went into the grave a conqueror. He laid down His own life, that He might, take it again, in spite of death. Not all the power of Satan could take His life from Him. Even on the cross He gave up His own life, and the Roman soldier’s spear thrust in His side simply furnished proof that He was already dead. When the appointed time came, He came forth from the grave in spite of all the power Satan could muster. “It was not possible that He should be holden” of death (Acts 2:24), because He had not once been betrayed into sin. He trusted wholly in God, who was able to save Him from death, and therefore from sin, which causeth death, and was heard for His godly fear. His victory was every moment of His life complete. But it was a real victory, for He fought a real fight. Jesus did not come to earth to amuse the universe with the sight of a sham fight with sin. This idea, altogether too general, that Jesus was not in the same situation as we are, and that He had not to resist sin as we do, not having temptations in the same way that we do, is the reason for so many sham victories, among professed Christians. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 757.4}

“By His Stripes We Are Healed.” -“We being made, perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.” Now we come to the joy of the truth that Jesus was in all respects in our condition, with all our weaknesses, wholly dependent on God for deliverance. We must not think that He was simply in a condition similar to ours, but that He is in our identical condition, for it was our sins that were in Him. He was here in our behalf. His whole life-work was for us, not for Himself. The victory He gained was our victory. So when we come into temptation, and sin presses us closely, “this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.” Remember that the sin is already overcome. Jesus in the flesh overcame it for us, and He still lives in our flesh to maintain the victory which He has gained, provided we will confess Him. Isn’t there the joy of victory in this truth? My sins are already overcome, and I have but to enjoy the fruits of victory, which is peace. Who would be overcome by an enemy which he knew was already overcome and disarmed? This confidence in what Christ has done for us is our strength. He has the joy of victory, and the joy of the Lord is our strength. Therefore let us say, and continue to say from the heart: “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 December 2, 1897, p. 757.5}

**“Prayers for the Dead” The Present Truth, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

On Sunday evening, November 11, the sermon in St. Joseph’s Retreat, the Roman Catholic church at Highgate Hill, was on “The Catholic Doctrine of Purgatory.” In keeping with the tendency of human nature to seek to justify itself in any course by saying to the accuser, “You do the same thing,“ the priest who delivered the sermon read the following extract from the Globe of November 6:— {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 759.1}

From a paper issued by the Protestant “Guild of All Souls,“ we learn that on Monday evening last (the eve of AIl Souls) “vespers for the dead” were said or sung in 153 churches, and that on Tuesday morning masses for the dead were offered in 230 churches. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 759.2}

No comments are needed; the fact speaks for itself. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 759.3}

**“Friday Observance” The Present Truth, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

One of the correspondents of the Church Times is concerned over the disregard of Friday. After the statement “that a true and loyal churchman” is “under obligation to observe all Fridays (except Christmas Day) as days of fasting and abstinence, both as regards food and amusements, such as dinner parties, garden parties, theatres, dancing, shooting, etc.,“ he adds, “As a priest, I have always taught my people to observe Friday,“ and then complains, that it is not uncommon in the country to see priests “in complete lay attire,“ taking part “in a shooting party on Friday,’” and says that “such practices lower the standard of Christian life among the people.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 759.4}

This statement we can readily believe; but the fact that the things are done on Friday has nothing to do with the lowering of the standard of Christian life. Let the clergy complained of leave off their attendance at “theatres, dancing, shooting, etc.” on every day of the week, and their Friday work or recreation will have no influence whatever in lowering the standard of Christian life. Christianity consists in living a Christlike life all the time, and not in slavish observance once or twice a week of things not commandment, or even hinted at in the law of God. As men multiply observances not required, it will always be noticed that they neglect those which God does require, and which He has made a means of grace. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 759.5}

**“The Mob Spirit” The Present Truth, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Mob Spirit .—We know nothing of the methods of controversy employed by certain anti-Romanist lecturers in Manchester and the North, but they certainly cannot have said anything a tenth part as hard of the Church of Rome as that which is said by the Catholic Times when it expresses the opinion that when lecturers enrage Catholics to such a degree by calumnies and falsehoods of the vilest kind that they cannot restrain their indignation, and the police authorities find it necessary to prohibit a meeting in order to prevent the shedding of blood, we think the shame falls upon those who aid and abet the slanderers. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 761.1}

Christians are never enraged by slander. If the Catholic Times is wrong in suggesting the danger of bloodshed it prints the worst of slanders on the Church of Rome; if it is right, when then truly the papal principles are again shown to find their expression in mob violence; as when the monkish mobs filled Rome and Constantinople and Alexandria with bloodshed in the days when the creed was in process of making. Since those days there have often been Romish mobs and Protestant mobs; but wherever the mob spirit is there will be found the papal principles, in whatever name the appeal to force may be made. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 761.2}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

-Germany has under way a naval boom. China is reinforcing the garrisons of her maritime towns. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.1}

-The United States proposes to increase its standing- army. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.2}

-10,000 people are said to be out of work on the Rand, the Transvaal gold district. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.3}

-Close upon 31,000 persons are now employed in cycle factories in the United Kingdom. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.4}

-Influenza is so prevalent in South Lincolnshire that the school attendance is seriously affected. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.5}

-A terrific dust storm in Victoria wrecked many buildings in several towns of that colony the other day. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.6}

-A prairie fire has swept over a tract of territory in Texas nearly two-thirds the size of Wales, destroying many ranches. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.7}

-Before London’s great fire was done smoking last week, Melbourne was suffering a million-pound loss by fire in a crowded business portion of that city. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.8}

-A Bill prohibiting public football matches has been passed by the Georgia Legislature. Other American States are moving in the same direction, the game being declared more dangerous, demoralising and brutal than prize-fighting. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.9}

-The Manchester Ship Canal Company is providing for the large increase of grain imports by building in Manchester a huge elevator and warehouse, to store 40,000 tons, Manchester is the distributing centre for a population of eight millions. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.10}

-A little time ago telegrams reported a cyclone in Chittagong, Upper Burmah, and little was thought of it. Later advices state however that a tidal wave swept over large areas, about 1,000 lives being lost, and nearly a million people being rendered homeless. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.11}

-A officer of the Bombay Police says: “There is no use disguising the fact that not only is the plague very bad, but it is increasing and spreading. Here in the Satara district it is worse than anywhere, and the mortality is appalling, and no measures or precautions seem to be of any avail.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.12}

-The scenes in the Austrian Parliament culminated last week in a general fight among the deputies, fists, feet, and sticks being used. With such a temper among the law-makers of the empire, it will not be strange if there is a general revival of violence among the people. Race jealousy is the cause of the hateful temper. Austria is made up of many nationalities, each jealous of the other. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.13}

-It is suggested that if Germany holds to the slice of Chinese territory which she has occupied on the excuse of protecting missionaries, Russia, France, and Great Britain will have to seize each an equal amount of territory, so that Germany may not have more than her share. And what of China? Well, China is helpless and so there is no special danger from that quarter. And China is heathen, too, and the other powers are “Christian.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 766.14}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

It is said that every official of the little State of Monte Carlo, that chief gambling resort of Europe, has to provide himself with a certificate showing that he goes to Confessional. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.1}

The martydom of Stephen seemed but to whet the appetite of the Jewish rulers for blood, and a great persecution began against the Christians in Jerusalem, “and they were all scattered abroad throughout the region of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.” “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word.” Acts 8:1, 4. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.2}

Reference is made to this in Acts 11:19, 20, where we read that “they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Autioch, preaching the Word to none but Jews only. And some of them ... spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.” {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.3}

If in reading these verses we allow our attention to be absorbed by the fact that the disciples at first preached to the Jews only, we shall miss the great lesson that the narrative contains for us. The main thing is, that they preached the Word, that is, they preached the Lord Jesus. With their hearts full of that Word, it was sure to be only a question of time when their lips would proclaim it to all, without regard to race or nationality. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.4}

Note that they preached the Word. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” “All things were made by Him.” “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” They preached the living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as is plainly stated in Acts 11:20. They did not merely preach about Christ, but they preached Christ Himself, the Word made flesh, Christ was in their hearts, and came forth in their words, so that all who heard the Word spoken received Christ. It was for the hearers then to decide whether they would keep Him or reject Him. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.5}

Pay special attention to the fact that all the church went everywhere preaching, “except the apostles.” Jesus had said, “Ye shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8), but it was not the apostles who first witnessed in Judea and Samaria and, the adjoining countries. It was those whom a proud hierarchy has contemptuously designated the “lay members.” That is, they were-simply people, without any titles added to their names. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.6}

Thus in the very beginning God made it unmistakably evident that the Gospel was committed to all, not to a few select ones in the church. The church itself exists for the sole purpose of showing forth the excellencies of Christ. Is the church doing that work now? Imagine that all the professed Christians in any town in England were suddenly obliged to leave their homes, and flee for their lives, wandering through the country; how many of them would go about preaching the Word? How many of them would be in a condition to do so? This is a is a question for each individual to consider for himself. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.7}

“But” we cannot all be expected to preach; we have not had the training;” some may say. That depends on what one means by preaching. If it be to stand up in a public place before an assembly, and to deliver a nicely-arranged sermon having more or less connection with the Bible, it is true that all cannot preach, and cannot and ought not to be expected to. All that may be done, and yet there be no real preaching of the Word. Who supposes for a moment that the disciples went everywhere delivering sermons? They were common people, of the same sort that compose the bulk of the Christian churches in these days. “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.” 1 Corinthians 1:26. Whatever they did can be done, and ought to be done by all Christians in every age. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.8}

The Greek word in Acts 8:4, which is rendered “preaching” is the word which we have Anglicised as “evangelising.” An evangel is good tidings, an evangelist is one who announces good news, and to evangelise is to proclaim or announce good tidings. The disciples therefore went everywhere proclaiming to those whom they met the good news which they had received, namely, salvation from sin, by Jesus Christ. Not all had the same power, or the same gift of language, but every one could tell what he knew. All could tell the power and speak to the praise of Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. That is all that is required. He who has a personal, acquaintance with the Lord, can tell somebody else about Him. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.9}

There is another word, however, used in Acts 11:19, to describe the same work that we are talking about. In our version we have the word “preaching,“ and that is perfectly correct, for the same Greek word is often used of the announcing of the Gospel by the prophets and apostles and Christ; but in the Revised Version we have the more common rendering, “speaking.” Now the primary meaning of the Greek word here used is “to talk, chatter, babble.” The noun derived from it means, “talking, babbling, gossip.” It is the regular word used to signify common conversation. The very same Greek word comes to its almost unchanged through the Latin and the German, as “lullaby” and in Lollard, a name given to those “Biblemen” who in the days of W ycliffe went through the country singing and talking. The disciples, therefore, went everywhere chatting the Word. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.10}

We have now the whole story; wherever; the disciples went, the burden of their conversation was Jesus. People are usually inclined to talk most of that which they know best, and they knew Jesus better than anything else. As they made the acquaintance of people, and entered into conversation with them, their “gossip,“ so to speak, was Jesus. It was not idle, meaningless talk, but easy, natural conversation such as with people who did not know the Lord would be common gossip. This is not so very hard work, is it? It is simply to tell the news, not the ordinary news, the gossip of the newspapers and the street, but the good news of salvation, which is for all people. Tell only what you know, but be sure that what you know is the truth. “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.” 1 Peter 4:10. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom” (Colossians 3:16), and that will be your qualification for the work. {PTUK December 2, 1897, p. 768.11}

**“A Message of Comfort” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

**“SHE HATH RECEIVED DOUBLE”**

“Comfort ye, comfort saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.” Isaiah 11:1, 2. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 769.1}

Here is a message of comfort; it is a message sent direct from “the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort,“ and therefore it contains true comfort; yet so perverse is human nature, that with scarcely an exception everybody finds a cause for discouragement and doubt in the passage rather than comfort.—We are suspicious even of God, so that whenever He holds out to us a good morsel, we examime it cautiously before tasting it, lest peradventure it contain poison. So in the case of the text before us, many people get no comfort out of it, because they are afraid of that word “double.” {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 769.2}

The assumption is that God promises His people double punishment, that is, twice as much punishment as they deserve, and of course they cannot see any comfort in that prospect; and no wonder. But here is where our suspicious nature deceives us, for the text does not say what our fears imagine it to say. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 769.3}

It is true that in some places in the Bible double punishment is spoken of, as for example, Jeremiah 16:18: “I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double.” Jeremiah 17:18: “Let them be confounded that persecute me, but let not me be confounded; let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed; bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction.” Also concerning Babylon in Revelation 13:3-7: “Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her.” {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 769.4}

The last text is the strongest of all, and at the same time gives us a clear insight into what is meant by double recompense. The wicked eat of the fruit of their own way, and are filled with their own devices. Proverbs 1:31. “He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.” Psalm 7:15, 16. That is, the wickedness of the wicked recoils or doubles back upon them. “In the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.” That is, fill it again to her for her own portion, even as she filled it for others. That to “double unto her double according to her works “does not mean to give her twice as much as she deserves, but exactly what her wicked works merit, is seen from the expression itself, and from the next clause: “How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her.” The only thing which God gives to people more than they deserve is mercy. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 769.5}

But note that these references concerning rendering double have no likeness whatever to Isaiah 40:1, 2. For those speak of destruction, while this one speaks of comfort; and there is no comfort either in or after destruction. Those are to the obstinate and determined persecutors of God, while this is to the people of God. Speak comfortably, or, literally, as indicated in the margin, to the heart of Jerusalem, “and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.” Note that the comfort lies in the fact that she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins; and note further that this receiving of double is identical with the pardoning of iniquity. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 769.6}

Note further that the double has been received; it is past, not future. Therefore even though we call it double punishment, it is punishment that has been suffered, and is now over. Well, there is comfort in that, certainly. It is not destruction, then, that is sure. Instead of trembling over the prospect of judgments to come, we may, by the authority of God’s Word, rejoice in the assurance that all the penalty for sins has been borne. How?—Read Isaiah 53:4-6:— {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.1}

“Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.2}

“He was wounded for our transgressions;” “the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.” By Himself He hath purged our sins. Hebrews 1:3. This is the comfort which God proclaims to all mankind, for “He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” 1 John 2:2. The comfort of sins atoned for is ours, if we do not reject it. The assurance that all our sins are upon Him is the cause of everlasting joy to its, provided we do not insist on bearing them all ourselves. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.3}

In Christ the victory over sin is already ours. This is also our comfort, for He says: “These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have; overcome the world.” John 16:33. Cry unto the people that their warfare is already accomplished, that it is an assured fact, and that they may now and for over delight themselves in peace; “for He is our peace.” If we but meet the enemy in the faith of Christ, we have only to deal with one that is already defeated, so that we may always be singing the song of victory. “Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Thank God that this message of comfort, this good tidings of great joy, is “for all people.” Take it yourself, and then make known far and wide the message of free, full, and complete salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.4}

**“The Hour of His Coming” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Lord gives the evidence in the Word by which we may know when His coming is near at hand, even at the door. We may see these evidences even now, and the message to the world is a message of preparation for the coming of the Lord. “But of that day and hour knoweth no man.” Matthew 14:36. Yet some men are continually guessing and speculating and making calculations about periods and cycles in the effort to fix the date for the Lord’s coming. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.5}

Now, this much we know, “The Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.” Luke 12:40. When men, therefore, have made their last guess, we may know that at that hour at least the Lord will not come. His coming will take all unawares who are not following His instructions. The knowledge of the exact time of His coming would not prepare a soul for that day. “Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding; that when He cometh and knocketh, they may open unto Him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching.” Luke 12:35-37. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.6}

**“Protection for the Churches” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

A recent number of the Christian contained a communication entitled, “The Filching of the Sabbath,“ in which, after mentioning Sunday concerts, and referring to other forms of Sunday pleasure-seeking, the writer suggests the following action:— {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.7}

I would suggest that this is a matter which should be taken up seriously by Free Church Council, and particularly the London and National Federations. I would also point out the necessity this matter suggests of the churches in every town uniting for the purpose (among other things) of securing the election upon public bodies of men who will defend things which Christians count dear. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.8}

The competition against the churches is getting very keen, and it is for those within to show the same degree of activity as those without, and that can be most effectively done by combining in the way I have mentioned. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.9}

Note the close of the first and the beginning of the second paragraph. “The competition against the churches is getting very keen,“ and they are advised to combine for the purpose of securing the election of men who will see that they get legal protection against competition. That is to say, the “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God” are encroaching too much on the churches, and the power of the State must be invoked to protect the church against sin. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.10}

But what is the church for in this world?—Simply to leaven the world with truth. “Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?” Salt is a preserver, a protective against infection; now when the salt has so far lost its savour that it must cry out for protection against itself being infected, what a sad state of things is revealed. The Saviour says that when salt gets in that condition, “it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.” When salt has to be preserved against contamination, it is not worth preserving. Its mission is to preserve, not to be preserved. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.11}

**“War in India” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Among the items of news from the war on the mountain tribes in India, is one stating that {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.12}

Private—, who distinguished himself at Dargai, and again during the attack on the rearguard in the Waran Valley, where, being separated from his comrades, and attacked by three tribesmen, he shot one, bayoneted the second, and, unable to extricate his weapon, killed the third with a boulder, will no doubt receive the Victoria Cross. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.13}

A man in uniform kills three men, and receives a medal from the Government; a man in plain clothes kills but one man and is hanged by the same Government. No wonder simple people get confused in the matter of morals. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.14}

**“Gambling” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Gambling .—The financial report of the Monte Carlo Casino shows that the proprietors spent 100,000 francs this year in returning to their homes persons who had lost all their money at the gaming tables .A like amount was devoted to “the prevention of suicide.” Notwithstanding this charitable attention to the victims of their gambling den thirty-five persons committed suicide there in the year. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.15}

“Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word.” God always deals well with His servants. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 770.16}

**“Lessons From the Book of Hebrews. ‘In the Name of Jesus’” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

A few points in the fifth chapter of Hebrews, in addition to what we had last week, can still profitably claim our attention, but as we had the text before us then, with questions upon it, we will not repeat them. That which is of special interest is what is said of Christ in verse 7. This may well be taken in connection with Hebrews 4:16. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 771.1}

We are exhorted to come boldly unto the throne of grace. But how shall we come? “What are our recommendations”? Can we come presenting what we have done as a recommendation to favour? No; for what we have done shows us deserving of death. The criminal dare not come boldly into court, claiming freedom on account of his crimes. We have nothing of our own with which to appear before the King. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 771.2}

Neither can we claim anything by virtue of what we promised to do. We have made promises too often, and broken them, to have any confidence placed in them. Our promises are worthless, because however good the intention may be to perform, we find in us no good thing with which to fulfil the promise. “Man at his best state is altogether vanity;” so that we have nothing in ourselves, whether past, present, or future, to give us boldness in coming to the King on His throne with our requests. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 771.3}

But we have better promises than our death own, even the King’s own promises. And we have a warrant from the King’s own Son: “And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall w ask anything in My name, I will do it.” John 14:13, 14. Now the only thing we need is deliverance from sin; when we have that, we have everything worth having, both in this world and in the world to come. We know that Jesus was delivered from sin, for “in the days of His flee he when He had offered up prayer and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death,“ He “was heard.” Hebrews 5:7. Although in the flesh, “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Romans 8:3), as weak as the weakest man that ever lived, for no man can be weaker than to be able to do nothing of himself (see John 5:30),-yet He was delivered from all the sins of the flesh. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 771.4}

But what has that to do with us. How is it that we can ask anything in His name, and for His sake? This is the question which reaches to the very core of the Gospel. It is the “mystery,“ over which the unbeliever stumbles, calling it folly and injustice, because he does not see the vital connection between Christ the only-begotten Son of all mankind. “The Word was made flesh.” Who flesh?—“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.” Hebrews 2:14-16. He took your flesh, my flesh, the flesh of all mankind, sinful flesh, so that He was in all things made like unto His brethren. They are partakers of flesh and blood: “He also Himself likewise took part of the same.” {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 771.5}

Whatever we have, He had, even the self-same things. John pointed to Jesus, saying, “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away; bears! the sin of the world.” There is not a temptation that has oppressed any human being, and overcome him, that did not press in with all its might upon Jesus, without overcoming Him. But the temptation was none the less real. People seem to think that the fact that Jesus never sinned is proof that He was not tempted in the same way that we are. As much as to say that if He had been tempted as we are, He would have sinned! Or, in other words, the same as saying that there is no possibility of successfully resisting temptation. They who would separate Jesus from the fullest share in our human nature, do not realise that in so doing they are labouring to deprive mankind of all hope. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 771.6}

It was our sins that nailed Jesus to the cross. 1 Peter 2:2-1. And it was our sins, that He bore in the garden of Gethsemane and in the wilderness of temptation. It was our sins (He had none of His own) for deliverance from which He spent whole nights in prayer. But He “was heard in that He feared.” Ah, thank God for that. What? Why, Jesus of Nazareth, in the flesh, in the weakest human flesh, with your and my sins upon Him, was delivered from them, He gained the victory over them. Isn’t that joyful news? Believe it, accept it, and pass it to others. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 771.7}

“Let us therefore hold fast our confession?” What confession?—“That Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, in our flesh; that “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” He is still “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” Whatever affects us, also affects Him. “He ever liveth to make intercession” for us. That is, He prays for us now as He did when on earth; and as surely as He was heard them, so surely will He be heard now. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 771.8}

So we come in His name. It is “not I but Christ.” Christ in me is making petition to be delivered from this sir. do not ask for my own sake; I have no personal claim in the Lord; but I ask it for His sake. Can there be any doubt that the prayer will be heard?—Certainly not; for it has already been heard, and answered. This very sin from which we are praying to be delivered, your own personal sin, and mine,-has been agonised over and conquered! The victory, then, is ours, is it not?—Most assuredly. “Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 771.9}

**THE GOSPEL IN UNSELFISHNESS**

Can you not see that even in personal conflict with sin, the fundamental principle of the Gospel-self-forgetfulness-comes in? “He saved others; Himself He cannot save.” This was true of Christ on the cross. The same must be true of us; and the same spirit of absorbed interest in others, and self-forgetfuluess, must be in even our most earnest prayer for personal help, if we would pray the prayer that is certain to be answered. When we come to the throne of grace absorbed in the thought that it is Jesus who is pleading to be delivered from the sins that oppress us, that it is He and not we who are appearing before God, and we lose sight and thought of ourselves in our interest in His mortal struggle with sin, then we are saved. Our personality is lost in His; we lose ourselves in Him; and then comes the thrilling thought, He was heard! He gained the victory over this very trial! Human words cannot describe the joy of the thought, because it is “the joy of the Lord.” And the joy of the Lord is our strength. Nehemiah 8:10. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 772.1}

Jesus was “made of the seed of David according to the flesh” but “declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” Daniel 1:3, 4. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead was the demonstration of the fact that He was the Son of God with power. It was impossible for Him to be held by the grave, because He had done no sin. But being raised from the dead, He was raised to the right hand of God, from which place He sends the Holy Spirit to all, thereby coming to dwell in all who believe. So we read that “being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.” This is a parallel to what we read in Christ’s prayer. John 17:1, 2: “Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee; as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.” {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 772.2}

“And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” Do you know Him? If not, make haste to become acquainted with Him as the Son of God and the Son of man. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 772.3}

**CHRIST “GLORIFIED NOT HIMSELF”**

An important lesson is to be learned from the first portion of the fifth of Hebrews. If every one who professes to be Christian would learn it, there would never be any seeking for place, any striving for the mastery, in the church. No one would ever put himself forward for a position of prominence or supposed honour. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 772.4}

No more honourable position than High Priest was ever known. If ever any position of responsibility and honour was to be coveted, that is the place. And no one more worthy of all honour than Jesus Christ ever lived. He was in every way worthy of the position. Therefore if anybody in the world could ever plead his own claims to any position, Jesus might have sought the office of High Priest for Himself. But what are the facts? {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 772.5}

“No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an high priest, but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee.” {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 772.6}

**THE LESSON FOR US**

What is the lesson-Just this: Since Jesus, who was in every way worthy, and perfectly fitted for the position of High Priest, would not and did not put Himself forward for the place, there is no human being who can ever with any grace lay claim to my office or preferment. No; not with any grace, for just to the extent that any man pleads his own cause, and seeks a position, does he show himself ignorant and destitute of the grace of Christ. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 772.7}

Because Jesus humbled Himself, therefore “God also hath highly exalted Him.” Philippians 2:9. His modesty, His humility, the utter absence of self-glorification, were the marks which showed His worthiness. Let every member of the church get this portion of the Word of God indelibly fixed in his mind. We may not advance ourselves, we may not plead our fitness for any place, nay, we may not even in our own minds canvass the ground and think ourselves worthy of the place. Love “seeketh not her own.” We must not only be silent before others, but we must not exalt ourselves to the place, even in our own thoughts. Therein lies all the danger. If we exalt ourselves even in thought, we are putting ourselves ahead of Christ, for He did not exalt Himself. Thus we would be showing our oneness with the “man of sin” (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4) instead of Christ. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 772.8}

“A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.” John 3:37. And whatever God designs that a man shall have He is fully able to see that the right man has, instead of another. “Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 772.9}

**“The New Missioning” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Two German Roman Catholic missionaries were murdered by a Chinese mob, Germany at once lauded troops, seized Kiso Chao Bay, and now demands of China:— {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 773.1}

1. ?50,000 to the relatives. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 773.2}

2. Erection of a Cathedral in China. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 773.3}

3. Refunding of the cost of landing troops. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 773.4}

4. Punishment of murderers and officials. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 773.5}

5. A railway monopoly in Shangtung. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 773.6}

6. Permanent occupation of the bay seized. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 773.7}

It suggests a new version of the beatitudes: Blessed is that country whose missionaries are persecuted in weak, heathen lands. This attitude of Germany has, it said, astonished the Powers, but Germany has only carried a little further the policy of all the Powers. This connection of Governments with missions is the curse of foreign missions. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 773.8}

There are still missionaries in all the great societies who believe the Gospel; and who love the people in heathen darkness, and in persecution bless and curse not, praying for those that persecute them as their Lord tells them to do. They are Christians. But as at home the spirit of the times is leading toward appeal to legal force and political methods, abroad there is a growing readiness to appeal to home. Governments for the punishment of persecutors. This only fortifies the ignorant heathen, who needs help and salvation, in his belief that the missionary is but the foreign representative of a foreign religion. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 773.9}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

-Italy’s finances show an improvement and the Government propose to reduce taxation. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.1}

-Martial law was proclaimed in Prague, in Bohemia, last week, and rioting has broken out in many parts of Austria. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.2}

-Spain complains that sixty-six armed expeditions have left the United States for Cuba to help the insurgents since the war began about two years ago, {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.3}

-A revolt has broken out in Albania, the Turkish province north of Greece. Moslem and “Christian” joined in the revolt, and there has been some bloodshed. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.4}

-The masters proposed arbitration in the matter of reducing wages in the cotton trade and the workers have voted against arbitrating. A strike seems inevitable in Lancashire. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.5}

-The British Government is negotiating a treaty with China for the acquisition of territory on the mainland, opposite Hong Kong, for the purpose of erecting forts and defences covering Hong Kong. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.6}

-There are rumours of a great strike of railway workers about Christmas. The companies say they cannot grant the men’s demands, and thousands of men have given their names to a strike programme. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.7}

-Day after day the conference between men and masters in the engineering trade has gone on, little headway apparently being made. Meanwhile women and children suffer, and the cold weather has come. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.8}

-A poor woman was charged in London with pawning shirts which she was making up for a City firm. It was stated that the accused was paid threepence for making a dozen shirts, she finding her own cotton. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.9}

-The gale round the coast last week furnished an enormous list of wrecks and casualties. The high tide in the Thames broke the river walls and submerged much land between London and the sea. Cottages were filled to the first floor with water, and hundreds of families have suffered. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.10}

-The United States Government is proposing to send a relief expedition to Klondyke. The latest reports from the gold country express fears of desperate conditions for thousands who are wintering there without sufficient supplies. Crime was breaking out, and hungry men were using violence to secure food. Probably the lust of gold never lured men into e region more forbidding than this Polar Eldorado. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.11}

-A Russian representative in Korea urges his Government to ensure Russian control of the country. “Korea is a rich country,“ he says, “and productive enough to make it worth Russia’s while to make the sacrifices necessary for the firm establishment of her influence.” It is the way of the world. If a country is rich enough to make it pay, and too weak to stand, almost any of the Powers are willing to make the “sacrifice.” {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 782.12}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Several Roman Catholic societies in America are, it is announced, to give the Pope a Christmas present of “a cross of gold set with ninety diamonds,“ valued at ?9,000. Our readers may make their own comments. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.1}

Austria is torn by dissension. When the legislative chamber is turned into a scene of lawlessness by the law making body, it is not surprising that the people follow their representatives and begin rioting. “The general outlook,“ says the latest report, “remains distinctly gloomy.” As the world throws off the restraints of the law of God, the spirit of general lawlessness must increase. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.2}

The success of the schools for Chinese conducted by our missionaries in Honolulu has made it necessary to answer the call for a school in another island of the Hawaiian Group. There are thousands of Japanese in these islands for whom work must be undertaken. As the result of the Chinese day-schools, a Chinese Sabbath-school has been organised, officered by Sabbath-keeping Chinese. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.3}

That is a grand declaration which the London Missionary Society makes to its people under the French authorities in Madagascar:— {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.4}

We declare again what we have often made known, that the London Missionary Society has no connection with the English Government. Its only object is the conversion of men and women. We beg you then to make known to everybody that there is not the slightest hope of England’s interfering on your behalf, either now or in the future. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.5}

To save men, with no connection with, or reliance on, any government on earth, that is the business of Christian societies loyal to the Kingdom of Heaven. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.6}

**“The Sea and the Waves Roaring” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

“The Sea and the Waves Roaring.” -“The winter hurricanes are in deadly earnest this year,“ said the Chronicle last week. “Every day, almost every hour, ships are going down on our sand-lined or rock-bound coasts, and men with them, and women and children are being cast adrift upon the world.” It was a veritable tidal wave which swept up the Thames and upon the East Coast, and the damage done has been declared to be unparalleled in recent times. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.7}

**“To Save Life” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

To Save Life .—The name of the Margate lifeboat, Friend to All Nations, nine of whose crew lost their lives last week, tells the character of the lifeboat service round our coasts, whether paid or voluntary. When signals of distress are heard or seen, in almost any fishing village a crew of brave men are ready to fight their way through the breakers to save life. No one thinks about who it is in need of help; human beings are in danger, and the lifeboats go to save them. Some shipwrecked Russians, who had lost their course, said they knew they were off the British coast when they saw the lifeboats coming to their help. Here is heroism of a different order from that of the battle-field. There men are daring and doing to take the lives of others, of a different nationality usually, but lives which will leave some poor home desolate; and decorations and Victoria Crosses and even national fame are the rewards. Here men fight the elements, putting life in jeopardy, to save the lives of strangers, and lives snatched from death are the rewards of success. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.8}

**“A Bishop on the Sabbath” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Bishop of Chester has just issued a pastoral letter on Sunday observance. We commend his explanation of the origin and authority of Sunday observance to those who think Sabbath-keeping an absurd thing. He first quotes Dean Vaughan as follows:— {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.9}

It would contradict history to assert the identity of Sabbath and Sunday. There is no evidence whatever of an express and formal change of the day. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.10}

It would also contradict the Bible, even as the Dean indicates: “There is no evidence whatever of an express and formal change of the day.”After stating, what is a natural sequence of the last admission, that the Sunday was not at first distinguished by abstinence from labour, the Bishop quotes further:— {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.11}

As the church became more and more a settled resident in the world, it needed more and more the counteracting influence of that periodical religious rest which is the principle of the Sabbath. Then the adapting power of the great Head of the church guided her to invest more and more the new Sunday with all that was of essential value in the old Sabbath. Without any formal change of day, or any dogmatical re-institution of the Sabbath of the Deoalogue the church was guided by the Holy Spirit to make her Lord’s Day in some sense Sabbatical, and so to increase its consecrating influence upon a society constrained to have the world too much with it. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.12}

How can thoughtful persons who read such statements fail to ask for the proof that the Lord or the Holy Spirit had anything to do with this change, since it is admitted that they themselves have said nothing about it? It is quite too common for men and women who are determined to have their own way, to excuse themselves in it by affirming that they are led by the Spirit. They then make the Holy Spirit to be nothing other than themselves. In the case before us, “the church,“ having thrown off the authority of God, proceeded to put itself in the place of God, by trying to give the same authority to “the new Sunday” that God gave to the old Sabbath. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.13}

**“Which Pope” The Present Truth, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Which Pope? -Of what use is it to reject one pope merely to accept another? The man who says that he will be bound by no man’s opinions or dictum, is to be praised, provided he is consistent; but too often he is as zealous a papist as any Romanist. For while he fiercely declaims against being bound by the ideas of a mere man, he is in that very position, in that he resolutely follows his own opinions. He is his own pope. We submit that he has not improved matters at all. There is probably no man in the world who would be more of a success as a pope than Leo XIII. If I were to have a pope I should choose him, for I think that he fills the position far more successfully than I could, having had more experience. “What would you have a man do? Shall he have no mind at all? Whom shall he trust? or shall he trust nobody? “Trust the Lord.” Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. “Thus saith the Lord, cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm.” And the curse rests upon him just as much if he trusts in himself as if he trusted in some other man. “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord.” Jeremiah 17:5, 7. “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.” Proverbs 28:26. Why should a man trust to his own foolish heart, when Christ, the wisdom of God, is given him. {PTUK December 9, 1897, p. 784.14}

**“The Man with the Muck-Rake” The Present Truth, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

“The interpreter takes them apart again, and has them first into a room where was a man that could look no way but downwards, with a muck-rake in his hand; there stood also one over his head with a celestial crown in his hand, and proffered him that crown for his muck-rake; but the man did neither look up nor regard, but raked to himself the straws, the small sticks, and the dust of the floor.”—Bunyan. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 785.1}

“As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.” Jeremiah 17:11. “The wise shall inherit glory; but shame shall be the promotion of fools.” Proverbs 3:35. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 785.2}

“Love not the world, neither the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he chat doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” John 2:15-17. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 785.3}

“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour than silver and gold.” Proverbs 22:1. “For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:18. “What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” Matthew 16:36. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 785.4}

**“Some Phases of the Sabbath Question” The Present Truth, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

**THE “DISPENSATIONS,“ AND THE REIGN OF GRACE**

From a reader of the PRESENT TRUTH in Hull, we have received the following letter which, according to his request, we publish. We have made no change whatever, except to number the paragraphs for the sake of convenience in reference. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.1}

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PRESENT TRUTH:—Sir:—There is a great deal in your paper I enjoy, but your position re the Sabbath is to me simply absurd. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.2}

1. Is it not according to the New Testament Scriptures a fact that our Lord was in the town all the Jewish Sabbath? He had fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law, and by this He closed the old dispensation; and by rising on the first day of the week introduces a new dispensation, namely a reign of grace, and not law. “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one who believes.” Romans 10:4. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.3}

2. Is it not a fact that after the resurrection neither Christ nor His apostles ever went to worship, nor to the synagogue on the Sabbath, unless it be to protest and to tell out the glad tidings of “Jesus and the resurrection?” {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.4}

3. Moreover, have we not the clearest statement that the risen Christ met His disciples three Sunday nights, as they met for worship, and breathed on them the Holy Ghost? {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.5}

4. Did not the ascension of our Lord take place on the first day of the week, and the descent of the Holy Spirit take place also an that day? {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.6}

5. We read that they met on the first day of the week; they were asked to give on the first day of the week, and John was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day. We have therefore the clearest statements for apostolic authority for keeping the first day and not the seventh. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.7}

6. The whole genius of our Christianity is bound up with the change, as the old order of things has given way for the reign of the Spirit, and not of the letter; i.e. the law. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.8}

7. I am sure that no one can controvert the facts as given above, and trust that you will give this a place in your paper; and by being taught of God we may have Christian liberty, not license; but to keep the day that cur Lord and Saviour burst the bonds of death and hell, and rose a victor on our behalf. Yours in blessed hope of our Lord’s speedy coming. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.9}

G. W. G. WEBSTER. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.10}

These very same arguments against the Sabbath come under our notice very frequently, but we usually pass them by unheeded, since we have no desire or time for controversy, preferring to present truth positively instead of negatively; but when a correspondent puts them to us in all sincerity, thinking doubtless that they present an entirely new phase of the Sabbath question, we are glad to give them attention. As the statements made are the common objections against the Sabbath, we do so the more readily, since the consideration of them may help many, to whom they seem to be real arguments against the Sabbath. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.11}

1. This paragraph contains several common misapprehensions, which need to be considered in detail. We first note the reference to {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.12}

“The Jewish Sabbath.” -This is a term found not once in the entire Bible. The seventh day of the week, nowadays commonly called Saturday, which the Jews kept, and to some extent still keep, is declared to be “the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” Exodus 20:10. In the days when the Eastern controversy was raging, the Emporer Constantine, who was a famous theological tinker, said, “Let us have nothing in common with the contemptible Jewish rabble,“ and so the festival was transferred from the time of the Passover, which might be any day of the week, to Sunday. From that time, and even before, there has everywhere been a bitter prejudice against the Jews, which has extended to everything that they have had to do with except money. So the Sabbath of the Lord came to be called in contempt “the Jewish Sabbath,“ the enemies of the truth well knowing that a contemptuous epithet will have more effect against a man or an institution than will a statement of fact. If Christians would strictly confine themselves to Bible terms for Bible things, and would call the seventh day by its right name, “the Sabbath of the Lord” or “the Lord’s day,“ it would not be as easy for them to pass it by. Many who never give a second thought to what they have called “the Jewish Sabbath,“ would feel very serious over trampling upon the Lord’s “holy day.” Isaiah 58:13. The fact, however, that the Sabbath was kept by the Jews before any of the so-called “Christian nations” were in existence, is nothing against it. Jesus Himself said, “Salvation is of the Jews.” John 4:22. Jesus was a Jew, brought up after the manner of the Jews. The news of His birth was first made known to Jewish shepherds, and it was Jewish fishermen whom He first sent out to preach. The whole Bible, with the exception of two books of the New Testament (if it be a fact that Luke was a Greek), and possibly one of the Old, was written by Jews. Shall we call it “the Jewish Gospel,“ “Jewish salvation,“ “the Jewish Bible,“ etc., and reject the whole thing? {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.13}

“Jesus Fulfilled the Law.” -The statement is that Jesus “had fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law.” Good. We believe it, because He “did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.” 1 Peter 2:22. The common conclusion is the therefore we have nothing to do with thy law. Let us see what that means: Jesus did a certain thing; therefore we must not do that thing. Jesus was baptized to “fulfil all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15) therefore we must not be baptized, and must be on our guard against doing any righteousness. The argument, in short, is “Avoid following the example of Jesus, a you would the pestilence.” We wish everybody to see just what is involved in the argument that Jesus kept the Sabbath and fulfilled every jot of the law, and that therefore we need not. All that it means is that we must not do as Jesus did. It may seem “absurd” to keep the Sabbath that Jesus kept; but this argument against it is a good deal worse than absurd. He left us an example, that we “should follow His steps.” 1 Peter 2:21. “He that saith He abideth in Him ought Himself also so to walk even as He walked.” John 2:6. Christ fulfilled the law, “the righteousness of the law might be fufilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:4. What propriety is there in people calling themselves Christians, and repudiating the ways of Christ? “Why call ye Me Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?” Luke 6:46. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 786.14}

“A New Dispensation.” -The statement is that Christ by rising on the first day of the week “introduces a new dispensation-namely, a reign of grace.” We call attention, in passing, to the fact that our correspondent makes this statement as confidently as though it were a Scripture truth, as he no doubt thinks it is, without stopping to hunt for or quote the authority for it. It ought to be understood that in a matter of this kind every statement that is made should have the fullest warrant of Scripture, and that warrant should be given; for a man’s assertions count for nothing. But now as to the matter of “dispensations.” It would be well here, also, if people would confine themselves to Scripture terms. If they did, no such words as “old dispensation,“ or “new dispensation” would ever be seen or heard. The Greek word for “dispensation” occurs but seven times in the Bible, three of these being Luke 16:2, 3, 4 where it is rendered, as it should always be, “stewardship.” The Apostle Paul says, “A dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto me.” 1 Corinthians 9:17. The words “of the Gospel” are added by the translators, so that we have the exact rendering in the Revision, “I have a stewardship entrusted to me.” So has every man who has received the grace of God. 1 Peter 4:10. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 787.1}

But the common idea that there are various “dispensations,“ in the sense that God deals with men differently during one period of time from what He does during another period, is utterly unscriptural, and most dishonouring to God. The terms “patriarchal dispensation,“ “Levitical dispensation,“ “Christian dispensation,“ are absolutely destitute of meaning. “I am the Lord, I change not,“ says God. Malachi 3:6. Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.” Hebrews 13:8. With God “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” James 1:17. All the people that have ever lived on the earth shall at the last day stand together before the Judgment seat; what a spectacle it would then be, if God should divide the multitude into sections, according to the age in which they lived, and judge one by one standard and another by another, so that one man would be condemned in a course that another would be justified in pursuing! Think you that every mouth would be stopped in such a case? Would there not be many complaints of unfairness and partiality? But this matter of dispensations will appear in still clearer light as we consider the statement that the “new dispensation” supposed to have begun at the resurrection of Christ, is {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 787.2}

“A Reign of Grace-and Not Law.” -If this means anything, it means that before the resurrection of Christ there was no grace for mankind! But God lived before that time, and if there were no grace it was only because He was not gracious. Who dare say it in that way? Who dare bring such a charge against God? When people lightly use terms coined by men, without thinking of their meaning, they often say things that they would not if they gave heed to their words. It is well to have these statements analysed. We repeat: The statement that at the resurrection of Christ “a new dispensation-namely, a reign-of grace,“ began is the same as saying that before that time there was no grace-that God was not gracious. Now let us see the facts in the case. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 787.3}

Hundreds of years before the resurrection, the Psalmist wrote: “The Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory.” Psalm 84:11. And again: “For Thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee.” Psalm 86:5. Solomon wrote that God “giveth grace unto the lowly.” Proverbs 3:34. Again: “The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion.” Psalm 111:4. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 787.4}

Nehemiah prayed to God saying, “Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness.” Nehemiah 9:17. For this he had the warrant of God Himself, who revealed Himself to Moses by name as “The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.” Exodus 34:6, i. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 787.5}

Take particular notice that this was at the very time of the giving of the law. So the reign of grace was in progress then. Indeed, the case is even stronger, for we read that “the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin had reigned unto death even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:20, 21. If there were any such thing as the beginning of the reign of God’s grace, one might from the hasty reading of this text conclude that it began at the giving of the law on Sinai. But although grace reigned there, it did not begin even there; the giving of the law simply made the already existing grace to abound. “Is the law then against the promises of God: God forbid.” Galatians 3:21. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 787.6}

Moreover the grace was not limited God said by Isaiah, “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.” Isaiah 45:23. God preached the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, “In thee shall all nations be blessed.” Galatians 3:8. And this Gospel which was preached to Abraham was identical with the Gospel that Paul preached; for there is but one. Galatians 1:6-8. The “blessing of Abraham” come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:13, 14); and that blessing was the blessing of cleansing from sin. Romans 4:6-9. We see, therefore, that the reign of grace is not only compatible with Sabbath-keeping, but that the proclaiming of the law of the Sabbath even made grace to abound. God was just as good and kind and merciful in the days of Mores as He is to-day. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 787.7}

Now we wish especial attention to b given to this charge which we bring again; the Sunday. Everybody knows that the statement, that we are not under the law but under grace, and that a change from law to grace began at the resurrection of Christ, is the great argument for Sunday observance. Nobody ever seeks to uphold Sunday observance without repeating it. Without this, Sunday would have no excuse for existence, for nobody is so foolish as to believe that Sunday dates from before Christ. But we have already shown that the statement that grace began at the resurrection of Christ, and effected a change in the law, is the same as to say that God was not gracious before that time, and that therefore there was no salvation. But this is contrary to the Bible, and a libel on God’s character. So then, the Sunday can exist as a supposedly “Christian institution” only by directly denying the unchangeability of God’s righteousness, and the grace of Christ the eternal Son of God; in short by denying the Gospel. We do not by any means say that Sunday observers intend to do this; far from it; but by the use of unscriptural terms which have no meaning, and of scriptural expressions without thinking of their meaning, they unconsciously deny the very first principles of the Gospel. Sunday is anti-Christian, and just to the extent that it is defended is the everlasting Gospel of God’s grace denied. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 787.8}

2. It is true that the apostles everywhere proclaimed the glad tidings of “Jesus and the resurrection;” but the time when and the place where they did it have nothing whatever to do with the Sabbath question. Paul preached daily in the streets and market-places of Athens. Acts 17:17. He also preached every day for two years at Corinth. Acts 19:9, 10. Every day the apostles and believers worshipped in the temple and from house to house. Acts 2:46. Of course therefore they met on the Sabbath, and Sunday too. But let this fact be borne in mind. The Sabbath rests on the immutable Word of God. The fourth commandment bids us keep holy the seventh day, not because somebody met for worship on that day, but because on that day God rested from all His work of creation, and blessed and sanctified it. If all the people on earth met together for worship on the seventh day, and if all the people ever since creation had kept the Sabbath, that would not add a feather’s weight to the sacredness of the day, nor would it be any reason why we should keep it. The reason would always remain the same, namely, the commandment of the Lord. And if not a man since the days of Christ had kept the Sabbath, its sacredness and obligation would remain undiminished. “Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.” Ecclesiastes 3:14. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.1}

3. Would our correspondent favour us with the Scripture record of the “three Sunday nights” on which the risen Christ met His disciples as they met for worship? We have read the New Testament carefully with reference to this very point, and can say with positiveness that there is no record that Christ ever after His resurrection met with His disciples as they met for worship. We have the account of His meeting with them on one Sunday night, and one only,-the same day that He arose,-while they were eating their supper (Mark 16:14), but it would be difficult to manufacture Sunday observance out of that. But this again has nothing whatever to do with the question. The fact that Jesus did not meet with the disciples for worship on Sunday, is not the reason why men should not keep that day. The reason is that God has given it to men as a labouring day. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.2}

4. Ascension Day .—We shall have to ask our friend to lookup the church calendar, as well as to do a little calculating for himself. Jesus rose from the tomb on the first day of the week; He was with the disciples and “seen of them forty days.” Acts 2:1-3. These are the facts. Now let our friend use his mathematical skill, and see if he can make forty days from any given Sunday end on any succeeding Sunday. It must fall on a Thursday, or at the most, on a Friday. We notice this, not because it would make a particle of difference with the Sabbath if Jesus had ascended on Sunday, but that it may be clearly seen how terribly destitute the Sunday institution is of argument to support it. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.3}

5. This paragraph answers itself. There is indeed the account of one single religious meeting on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7), although, since the apostles preached every day, there were no doubt many more; but we must not forget that on this occasion while Paul was preaching, his travelling companions were labouring to make time on their journey, and that according to the Bible reckoning the meeting in question took place on what is commonly known as Saturday night, and as soon as it gas light on Sunday morning Paul startee off by a short cut to overtake his fellows. Conybeare and Howsen (Life of Paul) regard this as so self-evident that they refer to it as a matter of course, without making any explanation. We have also the direction for each one to lay by something by himself, on the first day; but to call these incidental references to the day “the clearest statements” of authority for keeping the day, does not need to be called absurd. When one is going about so serious a matter as throwing the fourth commandment overboard, there ought to be at least one plain commandment authorising the change. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.4}

Yes, John was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day; what we now wait for is some proof for the assumption that that day was Sunday. Calling a sheep a goat does not make it a goat, neither does the fact that men say that the Lord’s day was Sunday, make it so. “Well, can we not know what day it is that John calls the Lord’s day?” Most certainly we can since John as a follower of Christ held the Word of God; and here are the Scripture facts:— {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.5}

“The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord.” Exodus 20:10. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.6}

God calls the Sabbath “My holy day.” Isaiah 58:13. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.7}

Christ said, “The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.” Matthew 12:8. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.8}

Therefore the seventh day is and always has been, and always will be, “the Lord day.” {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.9}

6. This paragraph is answered in the remarks on the first paragraph, and need no further consideration. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.10}

7. We have given “the facts as give above a place in the paper, and every reader can decide for himself as to whether or not they can be controverted. Facts cannot be controverted, but assumptions can, and the observance of Sunday rests wholly on assumption. The Sabbath of the Lord, on the contrary, rests on fact namely: “In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that them is, and rested the seventh day wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” The facts remain and so does the Sabbath. We have of course said nothing in this article as the deep and broad significance of the Sabbath as the assurance of perfect redemption through the cross of Christ, for. We have not been giving the arguments for the Sabbath, but only showing the emptiness of some of the arguments for Sunday-keeping. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 788.11}

**“Lessons From the Book of Hebrews. The Power of the World to Come” The Present Truth, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

In reading the fifth chapter of Hebrews, we always stop with wonder and awe over the picture presented in verses 7-9. The thought of the only-begotten Son of God absolutely in the condition of the weakest man in the flesh, so that, oppressed by temptation, and with no power in Himself to resist, He was constrained to cry out with tears of anguish to Him who alone could save Him from threatening destruction, seems to some irreverent, yet it is just the picture that is presented to us by the apostle, and it is the sinner’s comfort; for He was delivered, and it was in our flesh, and from our sins, that He was delivered; therefore in Him we have the victory and are free! But great as is this truth, the apostle writes as though he had not yet begun to say the really deep and difficult things about Christ. The dulness of his hearers, that is, our dulness, hinders him from giving utterance to all the wonderful things that he had seen in Christ. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 789.1}

It is a fact that to the great mass of professed Christians these things are enigmas. These things, which are the very foundation principles of the Gospel, are unknown to thousands of professors in every denomination under heaven. Therefore it is necessary that they be taught the first principles of their profession. But that is a sad condition of things. For note well, the Christian is in this world “in Christ’s stead.” Christians indeed are chosen as priests of God, to show forth the excellences of God, even as Christ did. Now it is true that there is always more for the Christian to learn, since no one can be a teacher who does not continually keep learning; but it is also true that the teacher must be well grounded in the first principles, else he cannot teach at all. Most people seem to think that a church is simply a company assembled to receive instruction from some man; whereas it is a people called out to be taught of God and to teach other people. The least in the church ought certainly to be familiar with the alphabet of Christian knowledge. This is so self-evident that the apostle’s conclusion in the beginning of the test that follows is most natural:— {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 789.2}

“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the power of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them; again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.” Hebrews 6:1-6. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 789.3}

The Whole Contains the Parts .—Some fancy that in the first two verses the Apostle speaks slightingly of repentance faith toward God, baptism, etc., because he exhorts us to leave the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection. These are indeed the first principles, but the apostle does not by any means say that they should be ignored. Quite the contrary. He exhorts us to go on to perfection, and perfection can be acquired only by adhering to first principles. It is an axiom, that the whole is equal to the sum of all the parts. If any of the part; are lacking, the whole is lacking by just so much. Every part is essential in order to make a perfect whole. The twenty-six letters of the alphabet lie at the beginning of all learning. For a time the child is wholly absorbed with them, but soon he masters them. Then we say to him, “Let us now leave these first principles, and go on to something higher.” Does that mean that he has nothing more to do with the alphabet, and can ignore them?—By no means; he can never get away from them without going wrong. He must use them continually; but we should not like to have him talk of nothing else but the alphabet, however essential it is. Let us take these first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and proceed to build on them. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 789.4}

Only One Foundation .—“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 3:11. That foundation is eternal. It is the Rock of Ages. That once laid, there is no need of laying another; indeed, there can be no other. Therefore if we lay again the foundation of repentance, it can only be because we have repudiated the one, true foundation. We cannot overturn or tear down the foundation which God Himself has laid; but we reject it, so that it will be to us as though it were not laid. The exhortation, therefore, to “go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation,“ is an exhortation to hold fast to the first principles. “As ye have therefore received the Lord Jesus Christ, so walk ye in Him; rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught.” Colossians 2:6, 7. The trouble, with too many is that they forget first principles. If, having learned one truth, they would understand that it is always and everywhere the truth, and would hold to it in every case, they would never go wrong; for the highest perfection consists simply in the use of first principles, The multiplication table contains all the principles that the most accomplished mathematician can ever use; for it is capable of endless combinations. When one has accepted Christ, He has the key of all knowledge, for He is the truth. Everything is in Christ, and that is why one can go on advancing to all eternity in the knowledge of Christ. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 789.5}

The Laying on of Hands .—This is the one expression in the list that gives special difficulty. Not but that the others afford room for much thought and study; but they are to a degree understood and practised, while the laying on of hands is not so well understood. It must, however, be remembered that not all the things mentioned in this list are things to be practised, as the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. But the laying on of hands is something to be done, and the question is often asked, “Why is not the laying on of hands generally practised?” The only reply is, Because of ignorance of the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Suppose some one should say, “Let us all adopt the practice of laying on hands;” then the question would be, “What for?” Certainly it would be but mockery to go through the ceremony of laying hands on people, while not knowing the object of the act. The first thing, therefore, is to learn why hands were laid on men. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 790.1}

Paul wrote to Timothy: “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.” 1 Timothy 4:13. So it appears that some gift was imparted by the laying on of hands. If it were not so in any case, then the act would be a farce. What the gift was, if it was in all cases the same, is an open question. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 790.2}

Some will tell us that the laying on of hands was always for the imparting of the Holy Ghost. It is true that sometimes the Holy Ghost was imparted in this way, but not always. Instances may be seen in Acts 8:15-18; 19:6. But in the case of the disciples on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), the Holy Ghost was imparted without any laving on of hands; likewise in the case of Coruelius and his friends. Acts 10:44. “One thing, however, is certain, that while the gift of the Holy Ghost was imparted both with and without the laying on of hands, so that the laying on of hands is not an absolute necessity to the receiving of the Spirit, something in the possession of the one who laid on hands was always imparted to the one on whom the hands were laid. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 790.3}

There is therefore one other factor in the answer to the question, Why is not the laying on of hands universally practised in the church? and that is, because as a general thing no one has anything to impart by that method. To go through the ceremony, simply because we see that the apostles sometimes did it, without the apostolic power, and with no results, would be to reduce sacred things to the level of child’s play. Note that nowhere have we any commandment to lay on hands. Therefore we are safe in concluding that the possession of a gift that may be imparted by the laying on of hands, will of itself direct the possessor in the matter of how, when, and why it should be done. Let us therefore pray for “the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.” {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 790.4}

The Powers of the World to Come .—What is the power of the world to come?—Since the world to come is the earth made new, it is evident that the power thereof must be creative power. In other words, it is the fulness of the mighty power of God. It is the mighty power which God wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead. Ephesians 1:19, 30. That is the power by which men are made new creatures. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16), and in the things that God has made that power-“eternal power”—is seen. Verse 20. The Word of the Gospel is the Word that plants the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth. See Isaiah 50:16. The power of the world to come is therefore all the power of the cross, or all the power of God. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 790.5}

An Impossibility .—The sum of verses 4-6 is that if one rejects and despises all this power, having once known and tasted it, it is impossible to renew him again to repentance. Of course, since there is no greater power than that which he has rejected. There is no other name under heaven, except that of Christ, by which salvation can be had. If, now, one treads under foot the Son of God, and counts the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing (Hebrews 10:29), it is evident that there is no hope for him. It is simply the question that we had in the beginning of our study, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 790.6}

The Danger of Falling .—Is it possible that one who has gone so far as to be made partaker of the Holy Ghost, and to taste the good Word of God and the power of the world to come, having been fully enlightened, to fall away? Some say it is not, but if it were not, the apostle would not have shown the hopelessness of such a fall. How does one stand?—“By faith.” Romans 11:20. The question then is, Is it possible for a man to depart from the faith, and thus to fall? We have only to read 1 Timothy 4:1, for an answer. We are familiar enough with the old saying that the fact that they turned away is an evidence that they were never fully in the faith, but that is easily disproved. Take for example the case of Peter. While on his way to meet Jesus on the water, he sank. Why did he sink?—Because his faith wavered. He doubted. Shall we say that the fact that he began to sink is an evidence that he had not walked on the water by faith? That would be to deny the fact. It is possible for a person to lose the faith by which he stands; therefore “be not highminded but fear.” {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 790.7}

A Ground of Hope .—Those of whom the apostle speaks in the text before us, are those “who were once enlightened.” When they turned away, therefore, they did it with their eyes open. They deliberately turned away from the light. They have rejected everything that God has for them. Therefore it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance. They are hardened, and have no hatred of sin, and no desire for salvation. Cannot the poor, trembling, fearful soul, who imagines that this text cuts off his hope of salvation, see that it does not mean him at all. He would be saved, but is afraid that he cannot be. But the text speaks of those who do not wish to be saved. They cannot be moved to repentance. Christ is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by Him. Hebrews 7:25. The worst sinner in the world, yea, the worst backslider, may be saved, provided he repents. The only hopeless case is the man who feels no sorrow for sin. There is hope, for “the Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all that be bowed down.” Psalm 145:14. So we may say, “Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise.” Micah 7:8. Yet it is better not to fall, and from this we may be kept, for He “is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” Jude 24. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 790.8}

**“A Hindu Convert’s Riches” The Present Truth, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

When Christ places the claims of truth and His salvation before all else it is because He is before all things, and throne who forsakes all to follow Him finds greater treasures than earth can afford. The experience of a Hindu convert, told by Mr. Hay, a Baptist missionary, shows how truly the Lord fulfils His promise to the one who must needs forsake all to follow Christ. This is the story:— {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 793.1}

“A young man called at the mission in Dacca under conviction of the truth. He said that in his home there was a widowed mother; she had an older son, a thriftless, profligate fellow. The young convert coveted the privilege of being the comfort and support of that mother; but he knew that he would forfeit it if he took his stand openly as a Christian. In that same home he also had a widowed sister, who would also need all the help and all the solace that a true brother could give, but he would be deprived of the opportunity of ministering to her if he became openly a Christian. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 793.2}

“But when they had knelt in prayer again, the Master’s mind was made so plain to him, and the power of the Holy Spirit came upon him so greatly, that he declared himself desirous of being baptized there and then. In the little chapel, without any ceremony, that young man passed through the waters of baptism. He went straight to his village home, fifty miles away, and from that home he wrote relating what had happened. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 793.3}

“He told how from the moment he entered the home and told his tale his sister had refused to touch food; how, while he was writing, his mother lay prostrate on the floor sobbing as if her heart would break; how his elder brother had stood beside him, and, pointing to his prostrate mother, had said, ‘To save her will you not come back into Hinduism?’ He told how he had been constrained to rush out into the darkness that he might be alone with God, and how there he asked whether he might, for a few years at least, make a secret of the fact that he believed in Christ, and how the answer came to him, ‘No; follow Me.’ He closed his letter by saying that he had grace given to him to stand against the whole world. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 793.4}

“A few days later he came on to Dacca. He told Mr. Hay that as soon as his relatives saw that he was resolved upon standing true to his convictions, their hearts were set as flints against him; how what looked like overwhelming grief in the case of the mother proved itself to be the degrading power of an awful fanaticism; how she rose from the state of prostration and uttered with fearful vehemence that curse which every Hindu convert dreads more than anything else. He told how the brother and sister joined with the mother in thrusting him out from the home, tossing out into the road a few scraps of clothing. Gathering his little all together, he came on fasting and footsore to Dacca. He (Mr. Hay) asked, ‘How do you feel about it all?’ Meekly lifting his eyes, he said, ‘Rich toward God!’” {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 793.5}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

-The proposed addition to the German navy will involve an outlay of ?20,900,000. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.1}

-Great Britain controls twenty-one out of every 100 square miles of the earth’s surface. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.2}

-The United States financial return shows a deficit of over 18,000,000 dollars for the year. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.3}

-“Worth,“ in proper names, such as Kenilworth, etc., signifies that the place stands upon a tongue of land. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.4}

-During the last fifteen years the number of persons undergoing penal servitude in Great Britain and Australia has diminished by nearly a third. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.5}

-Another gale last week sent a high tide up the Thames, re-flooding large districts. Many wrecks and casualties were also reported round the coasts. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.6}

-The cotton employers have decided not to reduce wages now, so that the calamity of a general strike of operatives in Lancashire is averted. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.7}

-Cold weather is putting a stop to the advance of the expeditions on the Indian frontier. Some tribes have submitted, but the leading ones are still defiant. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.8}

-The average mortality of the Lagos colony is 52 per 1,000, as against 19 for England. The mortality of whites in Lagos is still higher. Out of 150 Europeans twenty-nine died during the past year. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.9}

-Hundreds of broken-down horses are imparted into Antwerp from England, a sorry procession passing along the streets to the slaughtering houses, of horses which have had nothing to eat since their sale in England. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.10}

-The latest news from Klondike is from a newspaper correspondent, who is an expert miner himself, to the effect that the reports of riches are greatly exaggerated, and that provisions are running short and much sickness prevails. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.11}

-Of every 1,000 inhabitants of the globe 558 live in Asia, 212 in Europe, 111 in Africa, 82 in America, five in Oceans and the Polar regions, and only two in Australia. Asia contains more than one-half of the total population of the earth, and Europe nearly one-fourth. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.12}

-Germany has marched its marines back into the Chinese territory and taken the city of Kiao Chao, fifteen miles from the bay occupied. All the Powers seem to take it for granted that the partition of China must speedily follow. German ships and marines are being hurried to join the China squadron. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.13}

-A national conference of trades unions is preparing to meet to consider whether all unions shall levy on their men to sustain the engineers, or whether the engineers shall accept the masters’ terms and return to work. The engineers have not funds to go further than a week or two longer. They have spent about ?250,000 in strike pay in the pending dispute. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 798.14}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

It is estimated that the money loss to the country of the year’s strikes and lock-outs is ?15,000,000. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.1}

“In exchange for free education,“ says a morning paper, “the youth of England should be made to learn (military) drill.” {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.2}

By a typographical error overlooked, the word “town” appears in the letter printed on the second page of this number, instead of “tomb,“ as it should read. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.3}

We expect soon to be able to supply, through our own agents, that excellent journal, the Good Health Magazine, from which we have often taken selections, as in our Home department this week. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.4}

Sunday, the 19th, is “Peace Sunday,“ and all ministers of the Gospel are urged to devote that day to sermons on peace. It is said that many have signified their intention of doing so. That is good, but since the Gospel of Christ is “the Gospel of Peace,“ it is a matter of wonder what they are preaching the rest of the year, if “Peace Sunday” is something out of the ordinary line. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.5}

The Catholic Centre party in Germany are said to have made the repeal of the anti-Jesuit laws a condition of supporting the Naval Bill. “It is strongly believed in papal-inner circles,“ says a correspondent, “that a message will soon be issued (by the Pope) to German Catholics that will declare it their duty to the Church to support the Naval Bill.” {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.6}

Speaking on the Naval Bill, the German Foreign Secretary said that Germany could not stand aside and “look on at other countries dividing the world among them,“ but must claim “a share in countries which have a rich future.” There is an international epidemic of the lust of conquest. Scripture prophecy represents the nations of earth under the symbols of fierce and ravenous beasts, and such is their nature. “The nations are angry,“ and the division of the spoils of weaker peoples is bound to involve the great Powers in terrible conflict. The Lord’s coming is drawing very near. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.7}

“If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.” 1 John 1:10. God cannot lie; therefore it is a fearfully wicked thing to make Him out to be a liar. The only thing for us to do is to confess that we have sinned. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.8}

But suppose a man confesses that he is a sinner, and thus removes the charge of falsehood from God, but refuses to believe that God has pardoned his sins. That is just the same as though he had never confessed his sin; for “he that beileveth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.” 1 John 5:10. Don’t stop half way in your acknowledgment that God is true, for that is the same as not beginning. Admit God’s truthfulness, by confessing your sins, and then bear testimony to His righteousness and faithfulness, by declaring with full assurance that your sins are forgiven. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.9}

Speaking of the engineering crisis, Mr. Ismay, one of the great shipping proprietors, said the other day:— {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.10}

There was now in progress at home the greatest strike and labour disturbance of all history-the Engineers’ Strike. Both sides in their determination to fight to the last were strongly representative of our race. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.11}

And whichever side wins, it is the same in these industrial wars as in national ware, the defeated are only the more determined to avenge their defeat. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.12}

The Pope, it is stated by a Berlin correspondent, has approved Germany’s action in seizing Chinese territory as part punishment for the murder of two missionaries by the ignorant Chinese mob. “He feels,“ we are told, “the highest sympathy with the plans to open up China to civilisation and Christianity.” Of course; it is exactly the papal idea of “Christianity,“ that it should be carried to the heathen at the point of the bayonet. The same kind of talk is heard in England in Church and State, and in all Christendom. “For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication,“ and under the cloak of pious zeal for Christianity and civilisation “the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.” Do you hear the voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, My people”? Revelation 18:3, 4. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.13}

A Berlin doctor, a “freethinker,“ charged with attacking the Christian and Jewish religions, was sent to prison last week for holding up to contempt the teachings, customs, and institutions of a religious community recognised by the State. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.14}

Such a method of answering unbelief is worthy the worst traditions of official religion, always anti-Christian. Not only will this ruling do injustice to infidels who are made so by the ghastly farce of official religion, but it will serve to harry any who preach the Gospel in its purity who may bring against themselves the fury of officious ecclesiastics. It is doubtless true, as a German judge said a few years ago, that if Martin Luther could now appear in Germany and should preach as he did in Reformation times, he would be imprisoned for it under the laws of professedly Protestant Germany. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.15}

**“The True Reformer” The Present Truth, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

The True Reformer .—A traveller is one who travels, and not one who stays at home and writes books of travel. A worker is one who works, and not one who enjoys seeing other men work. So a writer is one who himself writes, and a reformer is one who reforms himself, and not, as seems to be the popular idea, one who sets himself the task of reforming everybody else after his ideas. It is true that the work of a real reformer does not end with himself, since everybody, however humble, has an influence, and so his example, coupled with precept, invites others to reform. But no man has any claim to the title of reformer, who simply devises schemes for others to carry out. Come! is the watchword of true reform. “The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come.” {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.16}

**“A Wicked Profession” The Present Truth, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

A Wicked Profession .—Lord Charles Beresford, who ought to know, said the other day:— {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.17}

The best fighting men were the “scallywags” of society, amongst whom he placed himself. He did not wish to be misunderstood, and he therefore mentioned that in his youth he was a boy who robbed orchards, who hated the idea of life at the desk, and to whom the prospect of a career in the Army or Navy was always most attractive. It was such men, he believed, who made soldiers and sailors. {PTUK December 16, 1897, p. 800.18}

**“Lessons From the Book of Hebrews. The Fruits of Grace” The Present Truth, 13, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

Our last lesson, Hebrews 6:1-6, showed that the unpardonable sin is the sin that is not repented of, or, rather, the sin of wilfully rejecting the grace that brings salvation. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 802.1}

“How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.” Matthew 12:31. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 802.2}

**SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT**

It was through the eternal Spirit “that Christ offered Himself.” Hebrews 9:14. The rejection of the Holy Ghost is the rejection of the means of salvation which the Holy Spirit provides. Now “whosoever will” may be saved. “For 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. There is no sin that man can possibly commit for which there is not forgiveness, for “with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption.” Psalm 130:7. But if a man will not be forgiven, if he does despite to the Spirit of grace; how can there be salvation for him? Will you say, “Is not God able to provide other means?” If you do, you impeach His goodness, by implying that His present salvation is deficient-that He has not done all that He could. But He has given Himself, and that is all that there is to give; it is enough, and none need reproach God because there is no salvation for those who will not be saved ; no life for those who reject the Author of life. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 802.3}

Bear in mind that the text speaks of those whom it is impossible to renew again unto repentance, and not of those who repent but cannot find salvation. The fault, therefore, is not with God, but with the ones who resist all His gracious efforts to renew them. For note further that the very text implies the utmost effort on the part of God, for it says, “it is impossible, ... if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance.” But if the utmost effort were not put forth, it could not be said that it is impossible. So the test before us teaches us, contrary to what many think, that God never remits His efforts to save men. Here then is hope for the sinner. Do you wish to be saved?—“Yes.” Well, God is most anxious for you to be saved; now if you are willing and anxious, and He is also willing and anxious, what can hinder it? for He has all power. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 802.4}

**AN ILLUSTRATION**

So we continue our reading in the same line:— {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 802.5}

“For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God; but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.” Hebrews 6:7, 8. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 802.6}

The bringing forth of fruit by the earth is used by the Lord as an illustration of the bearing of the fruits of righteousness by men. “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth.” Isaiah 55:10, 11. “For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.” Isaiah 61:11. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 802.7}

Again we read: “So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.” Mark 4:26, 27. But it is the rain from heaven, that causes the earth to bring forth and bud; therefore, as already read, the rain that falls on the earth is a visible representation of the grace and righteousness that God rains upon men. Thus we read: “Drop down ye heavens from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together.” Isaiah 45:8. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 802.8}

**ON THE JUST AND ON THE UNJUST**

Let us now see how it is with the rain upon the earth. God said to Job: “Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; to cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, where there is no man; to satisfy the desoate and waste ground, and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?” Job 38:25-27. God’s rain is like His grace; indeed, it is His grace, for Christ refers to it to show His kindness and forgiveness: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to then that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may he the children of your Father which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust.” Matthew 5:44, 45. God sends rain upon the wicked man’s farm, as well as the garden of the saint; yea, He sends rain on the desert, on the barren rocks, and on the sea. He is not sparing of His gifts. “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Romans 5:20. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 802.9}

Just as the rain comes for the purpose of causing the earth to bring forth fruit, and it falls not only on the soft, rich soil, but on the hard, barren, desolate places, so with God’s grace that brings salvation. The barren soil, or the soil that brings forth only thorns and thistles cannot plead as an excuse that it does not receive any encouragement in the shape of moisture. So in the text before us, Hebrews 6:7, 8, the rain is represented as falling oft upon both the earth that is fruitful and upon that which brings forth thorns and thistles. The earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it “receiveth blessing of God. But if it bear thorns and briers, it is rejected. It receives the grace of God in vain. So we see that even those texts which men so naturally use to prove that God has laid some hindrance in the way of their salvation, are full of encouragement. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.1}

It is all mercy that comes from God. “Yes, but the Bible says, that He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.” Very true; but you should read the connection. Go back a few verses: “What shall we say, then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath lie mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.” Romans 9:14-18. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.2}

**PHARAOH’s HARD HEART**

Can you not see that it is all mercy and compassion? He does not say that He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and that He will withhold it from whom He will withhold it. No; but it is mercy and compassion. But how about the hardening? Why, that comes simply from mercy rejected. When the plagues were on Pharaoh he said, “I have sinned,“ and promised to obey the Lord, and let Israel go; but as soon as God took away the plague, his heart was hardened. There are some folks who look upon kindness and favour as an indication of weakness. When God took away the plagues, Pharaoh looked upon it as an evidence that God was giving way, and that he was prevailing, and so he presumed upon God’s mercy. The same sunshine has both a softening and a hardening effect. The rain that falls upon some soil makes it soft for the plough, while the same rain makes other soil hard and stiff. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.3}

“But the earth is not to blame for that.” No; of course not, for the earth is inanimate, and so is not an absolutely perfect illustration of man, who is endowed with the power to reason and to will. Man is to blame if he receives the gifts of God in vain. The rain of grace falls constantly. “Showers of blessing” the Lord gives. If the soul drinks it in, the fruits of righteousness will be brought forth, for they are the fruits meet for Him by whom it is dressed. If, in spite of God’s ever-flowing mercy, the soul remains obdurate, despising the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing nor caring that this goodness is to bring it to repentance, it heaps up to itself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. See Romans 2:4, 5. But God will be clear when He judges. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.4}

“But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.” Hebrews 6:9, 10. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.5}

“It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13), yet He gives the soul credit for the work which it allows God to accomplish in it just as though it was spontaneous. There is nothing without God, yet He says, “For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself.” Mark 4:28. He counts it to the credit of the earth; just as though it had done it all. So when we yield to the influence of His Spirit, and the fruits of the Spirit appear, God counts it to us just as though we ourselves had originated it; for He endows us with His own Divine nature, and calls it our own. “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!” “Praise the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever.” {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.6}

*“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea;
There’s a kindness in His justice,
Which is more than liberty. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.7}*

*“If our love were but more simple,
We should take Him at His word;
And our lives would be all sunshine
In the sweetness of our Lord.” {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.8}*

**“Papal Supremacy” The Present Truth, 13, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

Speaking of the Papist riots in Manchester against lectures hostile to the Papacy, the Methodist Times says:— {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.9}

Papists, especially Irish Papists, who are very clever journalists, have to a large extent either muzzled or corrupted our Press. So far as we are aware the entire metropolitan Press has maintained a conspiracy of silence in relation to the Manchester riots. If the brutal rioters had been Protestants, every newspaper in England would have denounced them in long leading articles. There is scarcely a secular newspaper which has not in its office an editor, sub-editor, news editor or reporter, who is a Papist. News hostile to Popery is constantly excluded. Fictions and extravagant eulogies and exaggerations on the side of Popery are placarded daily. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.10}

This is undoubtedly true, yet in spite of it, the Methodist Times declares that “Romanism is going down, down, down, all over the world.” The wish is undoubtedly father to the thought. To be sure it says, “A century ago the Romanist population outnumbered the Protestant population by one hundred millions. To-day we are equal in number. At the present rate of progress we shall within the first two decades of the twentieth century, outnumber them by thirty millions.” We do not know as to the correctness of these figures; but they do not signify in this case. Nothing in this world is more misleading than religious statistics. It is not quantity, but quality that counts. When the Romanists are all Romanists, and a large proportion of the so-called Protestants are imbued with Romanist principles, the figures do not afford much ground for self-congratulation. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 803.11}

**“Boys’ Literature” The Present Truth, 13, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

A morning paper, which makes a specialty of its literary page, says in reviewing the Christmas literature for boys:— {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 804.1}

Adventure and daring are still the staple and unfailing theme. The old three-decker, the pirateship, the treasure island, and the glorious wars are the things which still delight the sons of an age which is called degenerate. We have heard the present Bishop of London tell a story of a perfectly model boy. He had gained a Board-school scholarship, and the local County Council had engaged to train him free for any craft or trade he might desire, and when asked to write down what he wished to be, he wrote: “A pirate, please.” How far the County Council was legally bound to fulfil this holy desire we do not know, but we could willingly have written a whole library of books for that boy. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 804.2}

A taste for stories of blood and crime is here treated as a hearty symptom, something proving that the age is not “degenerate.” Such a taste proves rather that it is. It is far from being amusing, as the reviewer regards it. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 804.3}

**“Survivals from Old Pagan Superstitions” The Present Truth, 13, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

**BURNING THE YULE LOG**

As Christmas itself comes not from any connection with the birth of Christ-for He was not born at this time of the year, and Christmas was invented several centuries after Christ to take the place of the Roman festival of the Saturnalia-so, too, it is interesting to notice that many of the old world customs connected with it are distinctly traceable to their ancient origin in pagan sun or fire worship. In the Christmas number of the Queen, Lady Cunninghame has an article on the subject in which she says:— {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 804.4}

“Many a religious observance, as well as many a household habit and everyday custom, may be traced back to times which, pagan and barbaric as they were, have given to the world of to-day some of its most cherished and poetic fancies. Let us give as an instance appropriate to the present season the burning of the Yule Log.... It takes the burning of the Yule Log out of the category of ordinary Christmas customs when we realise that it owes its origin to the religious ceremonies of pagan ancestor worship, and that the old-fashioned custom of lighting the Christmas log from the remains of the old one is a link in the chain that binds its to bygone times, when, to quote Max Müller, ‘the hearth was the first altar, the father the first elder, his wife, and children, and slaves, the first congregation, gathered together round the sacred fire.’ {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 804.5}

“It is not fifty years ago since, in Lanarkshire, it was considered unlucky to give a light to anyone on the morning of the New Year, and if the house fire was allowed to go out that day recourse must be had to the embers of the village bonfire.... In heathen days there was a sacred fire burning on a public hearth in every village, which was never allowed to go out. The Beltane fires of the Middle Ages were evidently in direct succession from these village hearths, round which all might gather. A curious relic of fire-worship was to be met with in Scotland when the century was young. It was called the festival of ‘The Clavie,’ and was held every year soon after Christmas, the scene being the little fishing village of Burghead. A tar-barrel was burnt on the shore, and as it fell to pieces there was a wild rush on the part of the fishwives of the place, eager to secure a piece of the lighted wood. With this a fire on each cottage hearth was at once lighted, which must be kept alight for the rest of the year if any ‘luck aboot the hoose’ was to be expected. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 804.6}

**“An Admission Concerning Baptism” The Present Truth, 13, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Rev. Canon Gore is delivering the Advent lectures in Westminster Abbey, and in the one on “Baptism and Confirmation,“ as published in The Church Times of December 10, we find the following statement:— {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 804.7}

Baptism, you know, was at first administered,-at least generally,-by immersion.... This going down into the water, this plunging under the water, and this rising again from the water, represented the burial of Christ: “Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him.” It was part of the symbol. It has been my privilege in India to baptize a good many people by immersion at one time: and certainly it has a power of symbolism which our modern methods of baptizing here in the West have not. Nor can we but desire that where circumstances admit of it this practice of baptism by immersion should continue, and should be practised, so that people should not forget that this was the original and normal mode in which people were meant to be baptized, and which carried with it a perfect symbolism, such as the other has only in part. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 804.8}

This is simple truth, and there is no reason in the world why the expressive symbol should not be retained, for circumstances always admit of it. It was not the inclemency of the weather, but the spirit of apostasy from the Word, that led to its abandonment. Christ sent His disciples to preach the Gospel and to baptize, not sprinkle, in all the world, and He understood the climate of the world. The writer of this note has himself administered baptism in the open air in zero weather, and has seen the ordinance administered when the ice had to be broken, but has never heard of an instance where the slightest illness of inconvenience resulted. Men live, not die, by the word of the Lord. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 804.9}

**“Strikes” The Present Truth, 13, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

The last Board of Trade return shows that in the last three years 15,500,000 days were lost in trade strikes. That is nearly equal to an entire year’s idleness on the part of 60,000 men. The net difference in wages is shown to be a loss of some 18,500,000 a week. These figures ought to lead the labouring men to a serious consideration of the question if strikes pay. There is, to be sure, a far higher objection to strikes, but this is a thing that can be appreciated even by those who reject the law of Christ. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 804.10}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 13, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

-British ships carry seven-tenths of the world’s ocean-borne commerce. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.1}

-Engineers in Hamburg work 50? hours for 24s. In England the rate is 39s. for 54 hours. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.2}

-Two-thirds of the Spanish people are said to be Carlists, opposed to the present dynasty. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.3}

-Westmoreland is the most thinly populated county in England, having seven acres to each inhabitant. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.4}

-The departure of the German squadron for Chinese waters was the occasion of the most enthusiastic demonstrations in Germany. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.5}

-90,000 men, women, and children in Thessaly are dependent on charity from abroad. The suffering caused by war does not cease when the war ceases. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.6}

-Even now in Greece there is a strong party against the acceptance of the treaty of peace with Turkey, and the Government delayed its conclusion fearing a defeat in the Greek Chamber. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.7}

-Every ton of Atlantic water, when evaporated, yields 11 pounds of salt; a ton of Pacific water, 79 pounds; Arctic and Antarctic maters yield 85 pounds to the ton, and Dead Sea water, 187 pounds. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.8}

-The Jewish population of the world in January, 1897, was estimated at 10,000,000, distributed as follows: In Europe,7,701,208; in Asia, 260,000; in Africa, 336,506; in America, 772,000; in Australia, 15,135. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.9}

-While Austria is politically in a state bordering on chaos, Hungary has shown in contrast such strength and firmness that it is said to be more than Austria a bulwark of the Austrian Throne and of the Dual Monarchy. One party in Hungary desires separation, but it seems to be in the minority. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.10}

-The warships of the various Powers are hovering round the Chinese Coasts. When the word is given there is sure to be a scramble for China, which is a far richer prize than Africa. Russian warships are said to be shadowing British and Japanese ships. A Bible Society agent says that Russian soldiers are all about in Manchuria. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.11}

-The retirement of the advance frontier force in the Afridi country toward winter quarters was accomplished under severe fighting. The tribesmen fought bravely, and those really responsible for the rising are reported defiant as ever. It is considered quite probable in military circles at home that the campaign will be taken up in the spring. Now the snows and cold weather make the advance impossible. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.12}

-According to a consular report, the great salt wells at Tsz-Liu-Ching, in China, find work for no fewer than 350,000 people, in respect of the operation of the wells, and the necessary refining machinery. Most of the shafts are from 3,000 to 3,000 feet deep, and are said to have been bored by a form of hammer drill, supported at the end of bamboo ropes. The brine is raised from the wells by buckets and windlasses, the latter being driven by buffalo power. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 814.13}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 13, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

An effort is being made, it is said, to give the Roman Catholic Archbishop a seat in the House of Lords as a life Peer, along with the Anglican Bishops. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.1}

The Bishop of London has been presented with a new mitre, of burnished ivory, on which, in gold letters, in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and English, are the words, “Holiness to the Lord.” {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.2}

Many think it hard that the Lord should ask them to turn aside from the world and walk in the way of His commandments. The hardness, however, is in the world’s way. “The way of the transgressor is hard,“ and the multitude find it so too late. Only Christ’s yoke is easy and His burden light. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.3}

“The world, one feels it more and more,“ says Dean Farrar, “is an amalgamation of falsities, hypocrisies, and prejudices; it still swaggers on in amicable alliance with the nominal Church, arm in arm with the flesh and the devil.” True words; and God calls to every soul to come out from the world and be separate from all its spirit and ways. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.4}

“I’ll tell you what I think about this portion of Scripture,“ says some one who is anxious to do me good. No; don’t do it; I am not at all concerned to know what you think about it; tell me what you know, and if you don’t know anything about it, don’t tell me anything. I can’t afford to be bothered with anybody’s guesses or speculations. I have ignorance enough of my own, without taking in somebody else’s ignorance also. What I want is more light, not more fog. Tell me what you know, and tell how and why you know it, so that others may know it as well as you do, not because you have told them, but because they can see it for themselves. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.5}

The Lord told Paul that He would send him to the Gentiles, “to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light.” Acts 26:17, 18. Two things are therefore necessary: to have our eyes open, and to turn towards the light. To have open eyes in the dark, or to have eyes shut in the light, are both the same thing, and both amount to blindness. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.6}

There are many blind people who are not aware of it. The Lord says: “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; I counsel thee to buy of lIe gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” Revelation 3:17, 18. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.7}

What is the characteristic of a blind man?—This, that he cannot see. That is all. Now how often we hear one say, when a truth plainly stated in the Scripture is presented to him: “I cannot see it. The man doesn’t know that he is blind. Indeed, while still protesting that he cannot see the thing that is put in plain, simple terms, he will sometimes presume to give a discourse upon light! Ah, we don’t need to go to a blind man to learn to distinguish colours; and whoever says, “I can’t see,” thereby declares himself to be blind. “Awake, thou that sleepest, and rise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light,“ for He is the Light, and He has the eyesalve. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.8}

A letter just received from a brother who has been sent by the Danish Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, to labour in Iceland, says:— {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.9}

Before I started I did hot know any Icelandic Sabbath-keepers. But here on the journey I have already met two, a man and his wife. They received the truth in America, through reading and had seen but one Adventist before they mat me; but they have been so strongly worked upon by the Spirit of God, to do something for Iceland, that they have sold their little farm, and are now on their journey to their native land, to seek to spread the truth. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.10}

Thus is the knowledge of God’s Sabbath spread throughout the world. Truly, not in vain are the islands waiting for His law. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.11}

At a meeting of the Glasgow Corporation on the 16th, the question of opening the People’s Palace on Sundays was discussed pro and con with great fervour, and to great length. Of course the fourth commandment was quoted against Sunday opening, and, unfortunately, there seemed to be no one present who was able to tell the council that the fourth commandment has no reference whatever to Sunday, except to tell all men to work on it. The proposal to open on Sundays was lost, eighteen members voting for it, and forty-four against it. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.12}

**“Dishonouring the Cross of Christ” The Present Truth, 13, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

Dishonouring the Cross of Christ.—Cardinal Kopp has sent the following telegram to the German Emperor:— {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.13}

The voyage of your illustrious brother to the Far East for the protection of the Cross is consecrated by the sincerest blessings. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.14}

We have nothing to say of the work in which the Emperor is engaged, but would only call attention to the idea that the cross is to be protected. Only the weak need protection. But the cross of Christ is the power of God. It is the protector and refuge of those who flee to it. It has no more need of protection than has God Himself. All so-called “holy wars;” all crusades, every exercise of force for the “defence” or “support” of the religion of Christ, is simply an evidence of unbelief in the value of that religion. Heathen gods must needs be protected, since they cannot help themselves; but God is the Refuge of His people. No greater contempt could be heaped upon the cross, than to talk about protecting or defending it. If men would but acknowledge their own helplessness, and trust the power of the cross to save, we should hear no more patronising talk about defending the Lord, and wars would cease unto the ends of the earth. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.15}

**“What War Is” The Present Truth, 13, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

What War Is .—Writing in the British Medical Journal, of gunshot wounds on the modern battle-field, a surgeon, who treats the matter merely from the professional point of view, says some things which show the demoniacal nature of war. Of the new Dum-dum bullet, now being used on the Indian frontier, he says:— {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.16}

I am told on authority that on impact it collapses “like a concertina,“ making so ghastly a wound that in all probability it would be forbidden in European warfare. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.17}

And of a service revolver bullet, he says:— {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.18}

On entering the body, the front acts like a wadding punch, cutting a clean circular hole, which does not close up, like those caused by other bullets. Expansion commences at once, and after travelling six inches it produces a jagged hole four inches in diameter, a wound doubtless sufficient to finish even a fanatic. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.19}

These results are attained after long study and experimentation to produce such a bullet. {PTUK December 23, 1897, p. 816.20}

**“The Throne of David. ‘The Sure Mercies of David’” The Present Truth, 13, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

“I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever, with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever; Thy faithfulness shalt Thou establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn unto David My servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up Thy throne to all generations.” Psalm 89:1-4. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 817.1}

This covenant with David was made after he became king, as we learn from the seventh chapter of 2 Samuel; but it was in effect made long before. When David was yet a shepherd lad, the Lord sent Samuel to anoint him king over Israel. The anointing was accomplished, and David was the chosen king. Yet for a long time there was no visible evidence of it. Instead of donning royal robes and taking his place at the head of the people, he retained his shepherd’s frock and staff, and continued at the head of his father’s flock. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 817.2}

Then came the time when he was called to court, but only as the servant of the king. But his position was far from enviable. Not only was he a servant, but he was hated, and his life was in constant danger. So this anointed king was obliged to flee for his life, and hide with a few friends in the caves of the mountains, living as best he could. The king with all his army hunted him like a partridge, so that he could not remain long in any place, but must continually flee, yet he did not lose courage. A study of David’s confidence in God during these wanderings is a most profitable employment. Let us note two or three instances. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 817.3}

**THE SLAUGHTER OF THE PRIESTS**

Once in his flight from the wrath of Saul, who was bent on taking his life, David came to the high priest at Nob, and received food. One of Saul’s ruffians, Doeg the Edomite was present, and went and told Saul that Ahimelech the high priest had inquired of the Lord for David, and had given him bread and the sword of Goliath. This was enough for the mad monarch. He at once called to him the high priest, and all the priests that were with him, the entire family of priests, and although they were innocent of the slightest disloyalty, he ordered them, eighty-five in all, to be slaughtered simply because one of them had performed a kindness to David. This shows the bitterness of Saul’s rage against David. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 817.4}

“And one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David. And Abiathar showed David that Saul had slain the Lord’s priests. And David said unto Abiathar, I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul; I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father’s house. Abide thou with me, fear not; for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life; but with me thou shalt be in safeguard.” 1 Samuel 13:20-23. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 817.5}

Such language would have been vain presumption if it had not been for the promise of God. As it was, it showed sublime confidence. David, an outlaw, who was so hated that not only those who showed him a kindness, but even the relatives of such ones, were ruthlessly slain, said to a refugee, Abide with us, fear not; the same one is seeking the lives of us both; but you are safe with me. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 817.6}

**DAVID IN THE WILDERNESS OF ZIPH**

At another time, David in his flight from Saul took refuge in a cave in the wilderness of Ziph. But the Ziphites were treacherous, and, desiring to curry favour with Saul, they went to him, and betrayed David’s hiding-place. Not only did they tell Saul where David was, but they added: “Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of thy soul to come down; and our part shall be to deliver him into the king’s hand.” 1 Samuel 23:20. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 817.7}

This pleased Saul wonderfully, but as he had often failed to seize David, just when he thought he had him fast, he determined not to be foiled this time. So he sent the Ziphites back: with instructions to take particular note of all David’s hiding-places, and come again with information, and then, said he, “I will go with you, and it shall come to pass, if he be in the land, that I will search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah.” {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 817.8}

This plan was carried out, and Saul and his men went to the place where David was; “and Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them.” Just then, however, a messenger came to tell Saul that the Philistines had invaded the land, and so he was compelled to turn back, just as David seemed to be in his grasp. Thus the Lord delivered David; but before this deliverance appeared, just when the men of Ziph were leading Saul and his force to his hiding-place, when it seemed as though escape was impossible, David took his harp and sang this song of trust:— {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 817.9}

“Save me, O God, by Thy name, and judge me by Thy strength. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth. For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul; they have not set God before them. Behold, God is mine helper, the Lord is with them that uphold my soul. He shall reward evil unto mine enemies; cut them off in Thy truth. I will freely sacrifice unto Thee; I will praise Thy name, O Lord; for it is good. For He hath delivered me out of all trouble; mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.” Ps. liv. See the title to the psalm. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.1}

Note that David did not say, The Lord will deliver me, but, “The Lord hath delivered me.” How was that, since he was in a great danger at the time that the psalm was composed? Why, the Lord had done it by His promise. The promise to David was just the same to him as though he had already seen the deliverance. Yea, he had seen it, since faith makes one see as present reality the things that are yet to come. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.2}

**DAVID FLEEING FROM ABSALOM**

We pass by many interesting incidents, and come to the time when David had been on the throne a long time, and his own eon had rebelled against him. In the basest manner Absalom had treacherously turned the hearts of the people from David, and now had only one desire, and that was to take his father’s life. Taken wholly by surprise by the strong conspiracy that had secretly been formed against him, David was forced to flee from his palace, with but a few attendants, and so seemingly hopeless was his case that a miserable creature dared to curse him to his face, and throw stones at him, declaring that God was now punishing him for his sins as he deserved. While thus an outcast, he sang again, as we read in the third psalm:— {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.3}

“Lord, how are they increased that trouble me l many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, there is no help for him in God. But Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God; for Thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; Thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongeth unto the Lord; Thy blessing is upon Thy people.” {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.4}

David was not saved nor did he trust in God because of his own goodness, but because of God’s mercy. David was a sinful man, as are all men; but his heart was tender, he acknowledged his sinfulness and God’s righteousness, and believed God’s promise. It is natural for men to think that God is unrighteous because they are; and the more they know themselves to be unrighteous, the more they think God to be the same. Thus it is: It is most common for one to say, “I am so great a sinner, I dare not believe that God forgives my sins.” But God has declared that His righteousness consists in the forgiveness of sins. 1 John 1:9. Therefore to say or to think that God cannot or will not forgive sins, is to charge Him with being unrighteous. Thus it is that sinners often make God out to be as bad as they are. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.5}

Not so with David; sinful as he was, he would insist that God was nevertheless righteous and faithful. God had promised him that he should be king, and not only that, but that his throne should stand for ever. But this promise was through Christ, for the throne of David was the throne of the Lord (1 Chronicles 29:33), and the promise that he should sit on the throne and that it should be established for ever, was the promise of everlasting righteousness which God would freely give him through Christ. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.6}

So David’s confidence was in God’s promise. God had said that he should he king, and no man or men could frustrate God’s purpose. It was not for David’s sake but for the Lord’s own sake, to vindicate His kindness and faithfulness, that God preserved David, and in this David was confident. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.7}

**THE SAME FULFILLED UNTO US**

“And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again.” Acts 13:32, 33. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.8}

To every one the call is sent, “Come ye to the waters! And he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.9}

The promise is, “To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.” Revelation 3:21. Yea, He hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,“ and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father.” Revelation 1:5, 6. “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” 1 Peter 2:9. And the “Holy Spirit of promise” is the anointing oil that assures us of this. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.10}

Therefore the Lord says, “Incline your ear, and come unto Me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” Isaiah 55:3. As surely as David was delivered from His enemies, because God had made him a promise, just so surely shall we be delivered, “if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” Therefore let us sing, {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.11}

“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 sware to 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 December 30, 1897, p. 818.12}

**“Protestant Loyalty” The Present Truth, 13, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

In a statistical article showing the numerical superiority of professed Protestants over Roman Catholics, the Methodist Times says:— {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.13}

When Protestants have learned to be as loyal to Christ as Romanists are to the Pope, the unnatural victories of Romanism will end for ever. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.14}

That is the vital point. The fact that so many people called Protestants are not loyal to Christ, but substitute human ways and customs for the ways of Christ, is what gives Romanism the lead, even though its numbers are seemingly fewer; for a Protestant that is not loyal to Christ, is in all essential particulars a Papist. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 818.15}

**“Lessons From the Book of Hebrews. Our Strong Consolation” The Present Truth, 13, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

When we began the study of the book of Hebrews, we said that we should take up the first four or five chapters. With this number we close the sixth chapter, and since this is even more than we contemplated doing or promised to do when we began, we shall discontinue the study for a few months, to resume it later. In the meantime other portions of the Bible will be studied, no less interesting and profitable than the book of Hebrews; and as every part of the Bible is a help to the study of every other part, we shall derive the more profit from Hebrews when we proceed with it. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 819.1}

It will be remembered that the portion of the epistle comprising the latter part of the fifth chapter and the first half of the sixth, is a personal appeal. Those to whom it is addressed are charged with being dull and slow to apprehend the deep truths of the Gospel, and are exhorted to go on unto perfection; they are warned of the danger of receiving the grace of God in vain, but are at the same time encouraged by a recognition of the fact that they had already shown love to the Lord in ministering to the saints. Then the exhortation, and the encouragement which we find in our present {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 819.2}

**SCRIPTURE LESSON**

“And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware 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 Melchisedek.” Hebrews 6:11-20. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 819.3}

Some Peculiar Idioms .—The words; “Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee,“ are a literal translation of the Hebrew words of the promise, in Genesis 22:17. But everybody who has given any study to language knows that an idiom, that is, a characteristic expression, in one language, does not make good sense if translated word for word into another language. A word for word translation is not an exact rendering. In the Hebrew language, repetition, whether of a sentence or phrase, or a word, or even of a single letter in a word, indicates emphasis, positiveness. For example, in Genesis 2:16 we have the statement, “Thou mayest freely eat,“ which is as plain as anything can be; but the word for word rendering of the equally plain expression in the Hebrew, is given in the margin, “eating thou shalt eat,“ which in English means nothing. So also in the next verse, where we read, “Thou shalt surely die,“ we have in the margin, “dying thou shalt die.” This latter expression, although meaningless, is the word for word rendering of the Hebrew words conveying the positive assurance, “I will certainly bless thee, and I will surely multiply thee.” {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 819.4}

Not Slothful, but Faithful and Patient .—Be not slothful, but followers [or, imitators] of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” Faith and patience! Trust and endure. We see that faith means activity, since it is contrasted with slothfulness. Faith works. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God, and “the Word of God is living and active.” The “wicked and slothful servant” is the servant who does not have faith in the Master. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 819.5}

The Promise to Abraham .—The promise to Abraham was that which the Spirit men through the Gospel in Christ (Galatians 3:17), in promises of God; and it Gentiles-all nations-through Jesus Christ. Galatians 3:13, 14. When God made it to Abraham, “He believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness.” Genesis 15:6. The promise is therefore that by which righteousness is obtained. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 819.6}

There is probably no other subject in the Bible, concerning which so great a web of speculative nonsense has been spun, as that of the promise to Israel, which is none other than to Abraham. All this confusion would be avoided, if men would but hold to the plain words of the Bible, letting them stand for just what they say. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 819.7}

Note this:— {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 820.1}

“For how many soever be the promises of God, in Him [Christ] is the yea; wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us.” 2 Corinthians 1:20. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 820.2}

God makes no promise, except in Christ; the promise to Abraham, as already seen, was confirmed in Christ (Galatians 3:17); therefore no promise of God is fulfilled except to Christians. Not that God does not keep faith with all; but that all His promises are such that whoever accepts them thereby becomes a Christian. Any talk about promises to be fulfilled to Jews, as distinct from Christians, comes from ignorance or rejection of the everlasting Gospel, which is the same in every age and to all people. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 820.3}

“He Obtained the Promise.” -In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews it is said of Abraham and all his posterity, “These all died in faith, not having received the promises” (verse 13), and still later, “These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise.” Verse 39. Yet in Hebrews 6:15, it is said of Abraham, “And so, after he had patiently endured, he received the promise.” How is this?—It is easily reconciled, when we consider that, “in Isaac shall thy seed be called.” Isaac was the child of promise, born of the Spirit. His birth was life from the dead. See Romans 4:19. So when Abraham was tried he offered up Isaac; “and he that 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 11:17-19. Christ is the Seed, and He could come only through Isaac’s line; yet so firmly did Abraham’s faith grasp Christ as the One “who is, and who was, and who is to come” that he calmly proceeded to offer up Isaac, assured that the Christ who was to come from him was already alive from the dead, with power to raise Isaac from the dead so that the promise that He should be born of his line might be fulfilled. Truly Abraham had the promise, even as he who for a surety knows the promise of God that he shall be “heir of the world,“ already has tasted “the power of the world to come.” {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 820.4}

“Two Immutable Things.” -What these two immutable things are, by which we have “a strong consolation,“ is plainly stated in the text. They are the promise and the oath of God. God’s promise is unchangeable; “the Word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.” 1 Peter 1:25. The Word needs nothing added to it to strengthen it. Let men remember this, when they presume to uphold God’s Word by assertions of their own. Any attempt of man to strengthen the Word of God, is but a reproach to it, a disparagement of it. The Lord receives not the testimony of man, and His cause is never strengthened by quotations from eminent men of the world in favour of the Bible. Abraham did not need anything more than the Word of God, for, let it be noted, the oath was not added for his sake, but for ours. Read Genesis 22:1-18 and James 2:21-24. There we see that the oath was not given until after Abraham’s faith in the promises had been shown to be perfect. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 820.5}

“Interposed Himself by an Oath.” -Thus we have it in the margin of verse 17. God swore by Himself. Now when one swears by any object, that object is put up as a forfeit. If the thing sworn is not fulfilled, the object is forfeited, God set Himself apart as a forfeit, or, interposed Himself between those to whom the promise was made and the possibility of failure. The promise is as sure as the life of God. If the promise should fail of fulfilment, in a single particular, then God would cease to exist. So sure is it. But if God should cease to exist, then would the universe be annihilated, for He is its support. Now God has created all things in Jesus Christ, and in Him all things consist (Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16, 17), so that it is literally true that in Christ we have all things. Romans 8:32. All the promises of God are in Christ, so that the oath of God is in Christ; Christ is set forth as the very being and presence of God. Thus it is that the existence and stability of the whole universe depends on the fulfilment of God’s promise to us. And what is the promise?—Righteousness; the forgiveness of sins. “Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.” Acts 13:38. Forgiveness of sins comprises cleansing from all unrighteousuess (1 John 1:9) and complete redemption. Ephesians 1:7. That God will do this, that He is faithful to His promise, and that not a sinner can apply in vain to Him for pardon and cleansing, we have the assurance in every blade of grass, in the sun, moon, and stars, that still pursue their courses. The snow and vapours and stormy wind fulfil His Word. Psalm 148:8. “For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever; Thy faithfulness shalt Thou establish in the very heavens.” Ps. lxxxix. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 820.6}

For Our Sakes .—Abraham’s faith was counted to him for righteousness. “Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” Romans 4:23-25. So the oath was sworn to Abraham, “that we might have a strong consolation.” You and I have an interest in that oath to Abraham, and therefore in the promise to him. Every soul who comes to God, comes to Him by virtue of that which God promised to Abraham. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 820.7}

Christians Children of Abraham .—“Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” Galatians 3:7-9. The oath of God to Abraham gives strong consolation to those who flee to Christ for refuge. On this is based the hymn beginning, {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 820.8}

*“How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word;
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
Who unto the Saviour for refuge have fled?” {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 820.9}*

But it is sinners that flee for refuge to Christ, and it is sinners that have a firm foundation for their faith in fleeing to Him for refuge. It was for the benefit of us sinners that the oath was given, for God would not leave the shadow of a chance for a reasonable doubt in the mind of any sinner. To be sure the same consolation remains for those who have been made saints; “for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.” Romans 5:10. Let every soul come to the Lord with this assurance of pardon and acceptance, that God has more at stake than he has, even as God’s life is worth more than any man’s. Thus, if God should refuse to hear my prayer, and should not forgive my sins, I should be lost, but God would also be lost, and His loss would be greater than mine. If we believe God, and hold to His Word, our cases are as sure as His. Surely this is a strong consolation. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 820.10}

Christ the Forerunner .—This hope is as an anchor sure and steadfast, which entereth into that which is within the veil, that is in the secret dwelling-place of God, into which place Jesus the Forerunner is entered for us. A forerunner implies others following after. We have already seen that Christ is for ever identified with mankind as Brother. He is one with us. He is the Son of man, “the Man Christ Jesus.” Well, now, there is one Man-the representative Man-already in the presence of God in person. He is already seated “on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens,“ a King on the Father’s throne. But it is one of us, who has gone there; One who is made in all things like unto His brethren. He is indeed “the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29), but we are joint-heirs with Him. Verse 17. Therefore if we believe in Him, if we have “put on Christ” in baptism, and are become Abraham’s seed, and children of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26-29) we have the same right to enter heaven and sit upon the throne that He has. He has simply gone before us to show us the way, and to prepare a place for us. John 14:1-3. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 821.1}

A Kingly Priest .—“Made an High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek.” Who was Melchisedek?—He was “king of Salem” and “priest of the Most High God.” Hebrews 7:1. So Christ is both King and Priest. “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the Man whose name is The BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a Priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” Zechariah 6:12, 13. What is Christ’s work as Priest?—“To make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” How much power has He to do this?—All His power as King; all the power of the throne of grace on which He sits. What more could be said to give confidence to a trembling soul? He is King of righteousness, and also King of peace. Let Him reign in your heart, “and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” “Blessed be His glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen and Amen.” {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 821.2}

**“A Head Master on Education” The Present Truth, 13, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

There has been of late some wholesome comment on the subject of education. Attention having been called to the fact that boys are crammed with a certain amount of Latin and Greek, which their station in life gives them no opportunity to use, even if they had learned it so that it could be used, a head master writes thus to the Daily Mail:— {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 823.1}

I have long felt that, in nine cases out of ten, the teaching of dead languages to middle-class boys is a dead failure. But we headmasters still persist in digging a certain amount of Latin, and less Greek, into the stony surface of the brain which the average middle-class boy possesses, not (I think) because we are convinced that by so doing we shall improve the intelligence of the pupil, or give him a taste for literature, but solely because these things are demanded by the parents and the public in the interests of the “examination.” {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 823.2}

The fact is, the whole system of modern “education” is superimposed on a basis of cram, with an examination as the ultimate end to be aimed at. Hence the disastrous results that ensue in so many cases. Education is everywhere being sacrificed to examination. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 823.3}

The fault lies in the system, not in the teachers; but the fact is, that what is commonly called teaching children consists in showing them how to “do” certain puzzles, instead of developing their power to think. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 823.4}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 13, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

-France is now sending milk to England. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.1}

-Over 1,000 troops left England last week for India. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.2}

-Earthquakes were reported from Asia Minor last week. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.3}

-In setting free his Greek prisoners of war last week, the Sultan gave ?1 to each private, and ?5 to each non-commissioned officer. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.4}

-There is said to be a great increase in the use of snuff, the habit being revived as a fashionable craze. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.5}

-The Post Office is starting motor-car mail coaches. One runs from London to Redhill, Surrey. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.6}

-A grave symptom of the unrest in Austria is the refusal of troops on several recent occasions to obey orders. The racial rivalries run all through the army. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.7}

-A statistician tells us that the Queen reigns over one continent, 100 peninsulas, 500 promontories, 1,000 lakes, 3,000 rivers, and 10,000 islands. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.8}

-The Christmas-tree is quite a modern innovation, so far as this country is concerned. It has only been introduced during the present century, and was brought over by the Prince Consort. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.9}

-Large numbers of flintlock guns, six feet long, are made in Birmingham at six shillings each, and many of these weapons find a large market in Darkest Africa. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.10}

-Fishermen were prosecuted in Wales last week for fishing on Sunday. The charge was dismissed as the act was committed on the high seas, out of the court’s jurisdiction. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.11}

-The most disastrous drought known for many years is now devastating parts of Cape Colony. Stock is perishing in vast numbers and farmers are being ruined wholesale. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.12}

-The general gathering of ships of war about the Chinese coast shows that all the nations directly interested think it well to be ready to take a hand in the division of China the moment the word is given. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.13}

-The Russian government is buying immense stores of provisions in America for its forces in Easter Asia. A Chicago packing house recently sold Russian agents 10,000 tons of salt beef. The problem now in the great army campaigns is to feed the men. The coal supply also troubles the great navies. Battleships are useless without coal. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.14}

-An ingenious competition has, says a newspaper, been started at Newcastle for the benefit of the locked-out engineers. One of the establishments in the town has offered prizes for bread-making, and as many as 9,000 loaves have been sent in. After the prizes have been adjudged the 10,000 loaves are to be distributed amongst those who are unemployed in consequence of the engineering strike. The loaves have been sent from all parts of the county of Northumberland. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 830.15}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 13, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Acts 20:35. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.1}

These are the words of the Lord Jesus, who speaks with authority in this matter, for He “gave Himself for us,“ and giving Himself, He gave all things. “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.” 2 Corinthians 8:9. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.2}

That there is profit in giving is seen from the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:3: “If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.” There is no blessing to be received if one gives without love; but if love prompts the gift, there is profit to the giver. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.3}

Love therefore is the soil out of which all good grows. It was Christ’s love that led Him to give Himself for us. Love is the priceless gift; money cannot be compared with it, and all the wealth of the world cannot buy it. Therefore he who gives love, gives everything, the bestowal of his goods must necessarily accompany the gift. And even though he has no goods to bestow, in giving love he bestows infinitely more than the one who gives millions of money without love. The blessing, therefore, of giving is the rich blessing of love. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.4}

Seven Aberystwyth fishermen were summoned a few days ago at Aberayrou (Cardiganshire) Petty Sessions, for fishing in Cardigan Bay on Sunday, Nov. 21. The proceedings were taken under an Act passed for “the better observance and keeping holy of the Lord’s day.” The case was dismissed on the ground that the offence was not, committed in the parish where the charge was brought. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.5}

The Roman Catholics have a fine church in Seoul, the capital of Korea. A Russian representative, urging upon his country the importance of making its influence paramount, suggests among other steps that Russia should build at Seoul “an Orthodox Church at least equal in size and splendour to the church constructed by the Roman Catholic missions.” Thus the Koreans are to be impressed with the superiority of the Orthodox religion. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.6}

**“Salvation Offered for Sale” The Present Truth, 13, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

Salvation Offered for Sale.—We note in the papers that a priest in Canterbury is soliciting money for the support of a Roman Catholic church and school, and offers the following inducement:— {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.7}

Every donor of at least 1s. 6d. will be presented with Indulgenced Rosary Beads (Dominican Dolour or Five Wounds) that have touched the Sacred Relies of St. Thomas, or a lovely little Crucifix specially blessed for a holy and happy death. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.8}

That means that for one shilling and sixpence, the giver will be assured of salvation at last, regardless of what his life has been. There have been men who would gladly have given thousands for such an assurance. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.9}

But on the authority of Peter, of whom Roman Catholics boast, nay, on the authority of the Holy Spirit, who spoke by Peter, it is evident that what is offered by this Canterbury priest is a fraud, and that those who give their money expecting to get salvation in return, are cruelly deluded. Peter told a man that he was in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity, because he thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money. Acts 8:20-23. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.10}

The gift of God is so expensive that money cannot buy it. “Ye have sold yourselves for naught; and ye shall be redeemed without money.” It is procurable only with “the unsearchable riches of Christ.” Ephesians 3:8. “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, with silver and gold, from your vain manner of life received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ.” 1 Peter 1:18, 19. To mention money, as an equivalent for such a treasure, is blasphemy. Therefore whoever gets it must receive it as a gift. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.11}

**“The Dark and the Bright Side” The Present Truth, 13, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

In its Christmas day greeting the Daily Mail presented the following graphic statement of the outlook throughout the world:— {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.12}

“If we look abroad, it is not peace we see. The world is full of strife and misery. War broods over the cast and the west, and rumours of war echo from China almost to Peru. In India and Borneo our stout-hearted brothers are battling; at home a devastating strike makes many a home poorer for the loss of wage. In the West Indies the most loyal are wondering how long England can be bribed by cheap sweets and jam to let her fairest colonies rot and perish-the less loyal think of turning to a kinder foster mother. At the Cape men’s minds are anxious and the outlook uncertain. And everywhere there is injustice, cruelty, poverty and wrong to claim our anger, help and pity.” {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.13}

No one can say that this picture is in the best overdrawn utterance. Nor was it written in any pessimistic spirit, for the editorial teemed with exhortations to look on the brighter side of things, and to make merry. Well, we will look on the brighter side of things, and that is that these troubles are but omens of the coming of the Prince of peace to put an end to war and strife, to deliver the poor from the oppressor, and to establish everlasting justice in the earth. This is the only remedy, and it is sure and certain. {PTUK December 30, 1897, p. 832.14}