**“The Spirit of Antichrist. No. 2” The Signs of the Times, 13, 46.**

E. J. Waggoner

The next point to be considered is what is actually involved in this claim that all men are by nature immortal. We state as a proposition, that the claim that man are by nature immortal actually implies nothing less than that they are equal with God, and independent of him. This proposition we shall now approved. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.1}

1. Immortality belongs to God alone. Paul speaks of “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto.” 1 Timothy 6:15, 16. Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, shares this attribute with the Father: “For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” John 5:26. Angels are immortal, but only because God has given them immortality; men may obtain immortality, but only as the gift of God, bestowed on them through Christ, only, however, to those who seek it by patient continuance in well-doing. Romans 6:23; 2:7. Now for a man to claim one of the attributes of God, is virtually to claim all of them. Especially is this true if the attribute claimed be immortality; for the possession of life involves everything else. To claim immortality is to claim the very highest attribute of a Deity. God’s most sacred name is Jehovah,-the One who is,-and when he would give Moses the highest possible credentials, he said, “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” Exodus 3:14. So for a man to claim immortality as his own by right is to claim for himself equality with God, or at least to claim that he is a part of God. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.2}

2. The great, and, indeed, the only reason why we should serve the Lord with all our heart, and with all our power, is because he has created us, and we live only by his favor. Said the holy angels in Heaven, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things.” Revelation 4:11. And Paul, in proving to the Athenians that God alone should be worshiped, used only the argument that “he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things,” and that “in him we live, and move, and have our being.” Acts 17:25, 28. Now if it were true that we are immortal, and that our life, either present or future, is not dependent on the special favor of God, but that we shall continue to exist for ever, no matter what our character or condition, then it would be true that we would owe no allegiance to God nor to anyone else but ourselves. The claim that man is by nature immortal is virtually a claim that he is independent of God. So again we see that for man to claim immortality for themselves is to make themselves gods, or, at least, a part of God. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.3}

3. If man were immortal, like God, then, as stated above, he would be independent of God, owing no allegiance to anybody but himself; and in that case he would, necessarily, be his own law-giver and his own judge. Each man would determine for himself what his course of action would be, and *right* would be for each individual whatever his nature should prompt him to do. These conclusions are self-evident, and prove the main proposition, that the claim of natural immortality for man is a virtually a claim that men are gods, having all the attributes that the Bible ascribes to the one only true God. And this again shows that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is inspired by the spirit of antichrist, for Christ is God. John 1:1. Whatever dishonors either the Father or the Son dishonors the other. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.4}

Having thus briefly but positively shown that the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul is of the very essence of the spirit of antichrist, we shall proceed to show (1) that modern Spiritualism, the foundation-stone of which is continued existence for man, does most positively deny both God and Christ; (2) that all teaching having natural immortality as its basis has ever been opposed to God; and (3) that the teaching that man is by nature immortal always leads directly and surely to immortality,-that it is indeed because of all the wickedness that has ever disgraced this earth. We quote first the statements of leading Spiritualist writers. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.5}

The editor of the *Golden Gate*, which is probably the ablest and most respectable Spiritualist journal in the United States, in his issue of November 27, 1886, said:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.6}

“As Spiritualists repudiate the horrible doctrine of election, as taught by certain branches of the churches; as they believe in no Satanic personality, and have no use for an eternal hell in an orthodox sense, they would naturally be regarded by those who still adhere to those old traditions as outside the pale of redemption,-as indeed they are, vicariously, but not in reality; for they realize that if they ever attained happiness in this life or the next it must be through their own efforts, in response to the aspirations of their own souls. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.7}

“When a man learns that the only Satan in the universe is his own ignorance and the evil propensities and appetites engendered thereof; and when he learns that in all of God’s great plan of creation there is no one but himself to answer for his own inequities, it would seem, if he stops to think, that he would ‘seek the better way,’ and cease to do evil.” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.8}

In this passage the editor makes reference to “God’s great plan of creation,” yet he claims for man absolute independence of God, making man and not God the judge of right and wrong. Again, in the *Golden Gate* of July 2, 1887, we find the following editorial statement:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.9}

“The spirits also teach us that there is no atonement or remission of sin except through growth; that as we sow, so also must we reap. They have not found God, and never will, except as they find him in their own souls.” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.10}

Still more direct is a statement made by a correspondent of the *Golden Gate*, in the issue of September 10, 1887:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.11}

“When the truth was made known to me that ‘God is life, love, truth, intelligence, substance, omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient, and there is no evil,’ I became glorified in myself as a part of that God.” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.12}

*Light in the West*, a spiritualist paper published in St. Louis, Mo., contained the following, August 14, 1886:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.13}

“Man is a part of God, a spark thrown off from the Great Spirit.” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.14}

W. J. Colville is considered one of the greatest of Spiritualist lecturers. He lectures wholly by “inspiration,” and is held in as high esteem by Spiritualists as Christ is by Christians. In a lecture delivered in Oakland, Cal., June 19, 1886, he used the following language in answer to the question, “Where and what is Heaven, and where and what is hell?” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.15}

“The mind of man is the original creator both of that heaven and that hell which your own individual mind or spirit may realize; and no matter what your theological premises may be, the creed you espouse or the doctrines you favor, you cannot obliterate human conscience; and so long as you cannot obliterate human conscience, you will know hell until you are *reconciled with conscience*, and as soon as you are reconciled with conscience you will know heaven. There can be no heaven unless there be a perfect reconciliation between the impulses of man’s highest soul and his outward life; there can be no heaven until your individual life is *guided by the divine within* you, that ever points out to you the road which is the perfect way.”-*Golden Gate, September 3, 1887.* {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.16}

In a lecture delivered by the “inspirational lecturerer,” J. J. Morse, at the Spiritualist camp-meeting held in Oakland, June, 1887, the following statement was made:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.17}

“Truth is the voice of God speaking through the human soul.” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.18}

Now take the gist of all these statements, and we find it to be that man himself is God, and that every man is a law unto himself. Recall the statement of the *Spiritual Magazine*, that Spiritualism “recognizes a continuous divine inspiration in man;” the utterance of the editor of the *Golden Gate*, that man cannot find God except as they find him in their own souls; and that of Mr. Colville, that a man is in Heaven only when he is “reconciled with conscience,” and “guided by the divine within;” and the last one quoted, namely, that “Truth is the voice of God speaking through the human soul,” and what must we conclude? Simply that Spiritualism teaches that man must follow the impulses of his own nature, and that, wherever they may lead him, he is answerable for his actions to no one but himself. To show that this conclusion is warranted, we make a few more quotations. In a Spiritualist paper called *Lucifer*, published at Valley Falls, Kansas, in an article entitled “Marriage and Free Love” (July 15, 1887), we find the following:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.19}

“I acknowledge the presence of a power which we call Nature, and whatever Nature approves I encourage, and whatever Nature punishes I tried to avoid, such rewards and punishments being measured by the increase or decrease of personal happiness. It matters little to me whether moralists or reformers approve or condemn free love or marriage; the only question before me is to find out if Nature rewards one more than the other.” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.20}

Hon. J. B. Hall, in a lecture reported in the *Banner of Light* of the February 6, 1864, says:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.21}

“I believe that man is amenable to no law not written upon his own nature, no matter by whom it is given.... By his own nature must he be tried-by his own acts he must stand or fall. True, man must give an account to God for all his deeds; but how? Solely by giving the account to his own nature-to himself.” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.22}

Now in order to know the consequences that will result from holding that man is the sole judge of his own actions, and that a man’s natural inclinations are but the voice of God, and are to be followed, we have only to ascertain what is the nature of man. Christ, who “knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man” (John 2:24, 25), spoke as follows concerning what men are by nature:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.23}

“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.” Mark 7:21-23. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.24}

Solomon says of the heart, that “out of it are the issues of life.” Proverbs 4:2. Therefore when Jesus mentioned “all these evil things,” and said that they proceed “from within, out of the heart of man,” he meant that man naturally exhibit just such traits in their lives. The apostle Paul bore witness to the same thing when he wrote:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.25}

“There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes.” Romans 3:10-18. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.26}

This is the uniform testimony of the Scripture concerning all men, for Paul simply quoted what had been written by other inspired men. One more quotation will suffice to complete the picture of the natural tendencies of mankind. The man who is unrenewed by the Spirit of God is said to be “in the flesh;” and the “works of the flesh” are thus enumerated:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.27}

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.” Galatians 5:19-21. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.28}

This is a picture of the natural impulses of the human heart. It is a description of what will be done by all who, unrestrained, follow the leadings of their own nature. And this is not spoken of one man or of any particular set of man, but of mankind universally. The king on the throne, the beggar in the hovel, the learned scientist, and the ignorant peasant, the pious Doctor of Divinity, and the blasphemous ruffian, all have one common human nature. The natural impulses of the heart are essentially the same. A godly ancestry will often give one less of evil to contend with than another, but this does not disprove the general statements; it is simply one of the restraints that God has provided, only the restraint operates before the individual is born, instead of after. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 726.29}

It is true that all who believe that they are their own judges do not exhibit in their lives all the vices above enumerated; but it is only because there are certain restraints imposed upon them. But let them be in a country where the authority of God was wholly disregarded, and where all believed in the following their own impulses, and they would prove the truth of the words of the Bible. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.1}

Now let us trace our argument backwards: 1. The tendency of the human heart is evil, and only evil. 2. Spiritualism teaches that each man is to follow the leadings of his own nature, and is to be the sole judge of his own actions. 3. This teaching of Spiritualism is a legitimate and necessary consequence of its teaching that there is “a continuous divine inspiration in man,” and that man himself is God, or a part of God. 4. And the idea that man is a part of God, necessarily goes hand in hand with the idea that he is possessed of an immortal, indestructible nature. So we say that the natural tendency of the teaching that man is by nature immortal is toward unrestrained vice. When Spiritualists teach that all the god that men will find is in their own natures, they directly deify vice and crime.But Spiritualism is simply the doctrine that men have a continued existence without any break at what is called death. Therefore we repeat that the doctrine that man is by nature immortal, tends directly to immortality, and to that alone. If many who believe in that doctrine do love truth and right, and do live moral and upright lives, it is only because they have not yet followed that doctrine to its legitimate, ultimate results. God grant that such may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil before it is too late. W. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.2}

**“Items from the General Conference” The Signs of the Times, 13, 46.**

E. J. Waggoner

The last edition of last week’s report was the election of the officers of the Conference for next year, which took place Sunday, November 20, the seventh day of the meeting. The next day the constitution of the Conference was amended so as to allow the election of a home missionary secretary, a foreign missionary secretary, and an educational secretary. These officers have not been elected at present writing. Their duties will be to have a general oversight of the work in their respective branches. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.3}

A very interesting meeting of the International Sabbath-school Association was held on Sunday afternoon. At this meeting the following-named persons were elected officers of the association for the coming year: President, C. H. Jones; Vice-President, W. C. White; Secretary and Treasurer, Winnie E. Loughborough; Executive Committee, C. H. Jones, W. C. White, E. J. Waggoner, F. E. Belden, E. W. Farnsworth, Winnie Loughborough, R. S. Owen. At a subsequent meeting, the constitution was changed so as to make unnecessary the election of a Publishing Committee, and to allow of the election of a corresponding secretary. Mrs. Jesse F. Waggoner gave an interesting talk upon the subject of “Teachers and Teaching,” the following synopsis of which may be as interesting and profitable to the readers of the SIGNS as the talk was to those who listened:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.4}

“A teacher,” she said, “is one who causes another to know something that he did not know before. A Sabbath-school teacher is one who causes another to know the way to Heaven; and the successful teacher will also cause others to walk in that way. But in order to do that, the teacher must himself be walking in the way to Heaven.” She suggested that some might be discouraged because of their imperfections, but said that we need not be discouraged. She said that while crossing the Sierras recently, she had noticed flumes for conducting water for mining and irrigating purposes. In many places these flumes were so imperfect that they leaked badly, and she wondered how any of the water ever reached the destination, but concluded that it was because it flowed so swiftly over the bad places. The application was this; though imperfect, if we receive the waters of divine truth fresh from the Fountain-head, and are constantly conveying them to others so that the stream does not become stagnant, we may by the blessing of God accomplish much good notwithstanding our imperfections. We must be constantly receiving supplies from the Fountain-head. We sometimes notice the hills when they are all dead and dry and there is scarcely a green spot to be seen anywhere, and again we see lawns that are constantly green; the former have not received a supply of moisture; the latter have water every day. Just so if we teachers would be green and fresh we must be watered by divine grace daily. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.5}

Perhaps the most interesting facts presented were those upon the model teacher. The successful artist studies his model, so the successful teacher must study Christ, for he is the model Teacher. He was in love with his work, and so the successful Sabbath-school teacher must be in love with his work. Christ studied his scholars and knew all about them, and so we must study our scholars and learn all we can of their disposition and surroundings. All must not be treated alike. What would be good for one would spoil another, and if we would be successful we must adapt ourselves to each child and use illustrations which each will understand. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.6}

Christ always had something important to say. The way for us to have something important to say is to read, *study*, think, and PRAY. Anciently the sacrifice had to be prepared before God would accept it, and so we must be prepared if we would have divine help and sustenance. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.7}

Christ always gained the attention of his scholars; we, too, must follow our Model in this. To do this, we must be prompt, quiet, and reverent. The teacher should get close to his scholars, and make them feel that he is not afraid of them. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.8}

Christ was careful to make himself understood. Just so the successful teacher must make himself understood. The teacher should crack the nuts at home, and bring only the kernels to Sabbath-school. Do not use big words, and do not use any words that the children do not understand. Sometimes very simple words have to be explained to children; for instance, a child who has always lived in the city may not know anything about wells, springs, and woods, while the country child knows nothing about those things that are familiar to those in the city. It was also suggested that care be exercised in asking questions. Questions should be plain and definite, and yet not leading. For instance, the question, “What was David?” would admit of a dozen correct answers, and yet no one of them be the one that the teacher had in mind and wishes to draw out, while the question, “Was David a good man or a bad man?” admits of but one answer, and yet requires the child to exercise some thought. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.9}

Christ made use of all helps in his reach. He used illustrations and gave object lessons. The world is full of objects that may be used as illustrations. In every lesson have a point, stick to your point, and make your point. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.10}

The following import resolutions were passed by the association at this and a subsequent meeting: {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.11}

WHEREAS, The existence of many of our small churches depends largely upon the interest created by the Sabbath-schools; and, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.12}

WHEREAS, Experience have shown that where earnest personal labor has been devoted to the schools, by some judicious, practical Sabbath-school worker, the interest has greatly increased; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.13}

*Resolved*, That this association request each State Conference to employ some one of the officers of the Sabbath-school Association within its bounds, to devote the greater part or the whole of his time to building up the interests of the Sabbath-schools. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.14}

WHEREAS, There has been a difference of custom in the different State associations, in the matter of tithing their contributions, some tithing the whole, and others tithing only one-fourth, and it is desirable that there should be uniformity in this matter; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.15}

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this association that, beginning January, 1888, every Sabbath-school should pay a tithe of all its contributions to the treasury of the State association with which it is connected, and that after paying the necessary running expenses of the school, it should donate the remainder to whatever mission may be recommended. But this resolution shall not be construed as shutting off the members of any school from paying a part or the whole of the running expenses of their school out of their own pockets, leaving all the contributions, less the tithe, to be donated to missions. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.16}

*Resolved*, That we recommend that all the Sabbath-schools in the association make the London City Mission the recipient of their contributions for the year 1888. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.17}

*Resolved*, That we recommend to our Executive Committee such a reconstruction of the system of primary lessons as will naturally lead the young mind to a knowledge of God, to our need of a Saviour, and to the compassionate love of God as manifested in the life and mission of Jesus Christ. This to be followed by lessons upon those portions of the Old Testament history which illustrate these all-important themes. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.18}

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this association that when ministers being tent-meetings in any locality, they should at once, whenever it is practical, begin a Sunday-school, which shall be continued until it can be converted into a Sabbath-school, and that a short series of lessons on the life of Christ should be prepared for use in such Sunday-school. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.19}

*Resolved*, That we recommend that our State associations hold Sabbath-school Normals in connection with general meetings and camp-meetings, especially local camp-meetings, for the instruction of officers and teachers in the various branches of the Sabbath-school work; and further, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.20}

*Resolved*, That we request our Conference officers to provide opportunity, and to aid in procuring the necessary help, for such conventions. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.21}

WHEREAS, In the providence of God we have in the past year seen a good work opened in South Africa, our workers have enjoyed the divine blessing and favor, and souls are already rejoicing in the truth, and a good prospect seems open for labor there; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.22}

*Resolved*, That we express our sincere gratitude to God, under whose blessing and guidance all true success is attained. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.23}

*Resolved*, That it is a satisfaction to us, as an association, that we have been permitted to be in a measure instrumental in forwarding this work during the past year, and that we would hereby assure the dead brethren in that far-off land of our continued prayers and interest. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.24}

W. C. White, chairman of the Committee on Lessons, then submitted the following report, which was accepted:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.25}

Your committee appointed to consider plans for future lessons recommend for the Senior Division of our schools- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.26}

1. That we have a series of lessons on Old Testament history, and that about six months, beginning with January, 1888, be devoted to the study of lessons from Genesis. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.27}

2. That the remainder of 1888 be devoted to the study of doctrinal lessons, including the following subjects: “The United States in Prophecy,” and “The Third Angel’s Message.” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.28}

3. That the first six months of 1889 be devoted to a continuation of the study of Old Testament history. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.29}

4. That the last six months of 1889 be devoted to the study of doctrinal subjects, selected by the Executive Committee. We also recommend- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.30}

5. That the lessons for 1888 be written immediately, and, after approval by the Executive Committee, that they be published in two pamphlets, of twenty-six lessons each, for the use of Sabbath-school officers and teachers. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.31}

6. That the lessons for 1888 be written in time to be presented for examination at the next annual meeting of this association. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.32}

7. That there be published a series of fifty-two lessons, on the leading doctrines of the Bible, for the use of those newly come to the faith. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.33}

8. That a series of lessons for little children be prepared on the life of Christ. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.34}

9. That the Executive Committee employ the best talent within their reach for the preparation of these lessons, at as early a date as possible. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.35}

On Monday afternoon, November 21, the second meeting of the International Tract and Missionary Society was held. The principal item of interest at this meeting was the election of officers for the ensuing year. Following is the list of officers with their addresses: {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 727.36}

President, Elder S. N. Haskell, Paternoster Chambers, 48 Paternoster Row, London, England. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.1}

Vice-President, W. C. White, Pacific Press, Oakland, California. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.2}

Secretary and Treasurer, Maria L. Huntley, Healdsburg, California. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.3}

Assistant Secretaries:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.4}

Anna L. Ingels, Pacific Press, Oakland, Cal. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.5}

Mrs. F. H. Sisley, Battle Creek, Michigan. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.6}

Jenny Thayer, 451 Holloway Road, Holloway, London N., England. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.7}

H. P. Holser, *Impremerie Polyglotte*, Basel, Switzerland. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.8}

Josie I. Baker, *Bible Echo* Office, Melbourne, Australia. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.9}

Elizabeth Hare, Auckland, New Zealand. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.10}

Mary Heileson, Christiania, Norway. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.11}

Mrs. C. I. Boyd, Cape Town, South Africa. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.12}

A. Swedberg, Battle Creek, Michigan. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.13}

Executive Board:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.14}

S. N. Haskell, W. C. White, O. A. Olsen, A. J. Breed, G. C. Tenney, W. C. Sisley, M. L. Huntley. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.15}

On Tuesday, November 22, there were two meetings of the General Conference, at which the following recommendations of the Committee on Distribution of Labor were adopted:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.16}

That we recognize the good services of Brother A. La Rue in the ship missionary work on the Pacific Ocean and its islands, and recommend that he continue the same. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.17}

That Brother H. P. Holser go to Central Europe to act as Treasurer of the mission and publishing house, and to take charge of the book sales department and the counting-room; to teach canvassers, colporters, and Bible workers; and to help the German work in the field as he may have opportunity. Also to act on the mission board as alternate in the absence of Elder R. L. Whitney. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.18}

That Brother A. Barry, of Kentucky, go to Michigan to labor in that Conference. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.19}

That D. A. Robinson go to London to labor in that mission. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.20}

That Elder I. J. Hankins go to South Africa, to take the place in the mission there made vacant by the removal of Elder D. A. Robinson. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.21}

That William Arnold go to England to help in establishing the mission there. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.22}

That Elder John Fulton and wife be requested to spend a year at the Rural Health Retreat, at St. Helena, Cal. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.23}

That Elder Samuel Fulton take the place in the North Pacific Conference made vacant by the removal of John Fulton to St. Helena. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.24}

That Elder D. T. Bourdeau go to New Orleans and spend the winter in labor in that city. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.25}

The committee to whom the matter of a missionary ship was referred, have reported as follows:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.26}

Your committee appointed to consider the matter of securing a ship for missionary work among the islands of the sea, would respectfully submit the following:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.27}

We believe that such a ship is needed; we deem the enterprise a noble one, and well worthy the hearty support of all our people; but in view of the fact that some of our missions are now in actual distress, for the means which they *must have* to do the work properly which must be done; {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.28}

In view of the fact that the International Sabbath-school Association has devoted its contributions for 1888 to the London Mission, and we think it would be most profitable to our people to have all concerned in the missionary ship when it is decided upon, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.29}

We therefore recommend that the enterprise of setting afloat a missionary ship be postponed till the next annual session of the General Conference. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.30}

We would further recommend that a committee of five, consisting of three brethren from east of the Rocky Mountains, and two from the Pacific Coast, be appointed to take charge of this matter during the year 1888, and report to the next annual session of this Conference. And further, that donations to this enterprise may be received during the year, from any who feel disposed to make such donations. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.31}

Following are the principal resolutions passed in the meeting of the Health Reform Association:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.32}

*Resolved*, That we see reason for devout gratitude to God that the efforts made in our various Conferences the past year to awaken a deeper interest in the cause of health and temperance, have met with such marked success, the tangible evidence of which is apparent in the greatly increased number of subscribers to *Good Health*, and the sale of so many thousands of health and temperance publications. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.33}

*Resolved*, That we hail with delight the news which comes to us through our representatives from Scandinavia, that the Danish-Norwegian and Swedish health journals are so rapidly increasing their lists of subscribers through the efforts of canvassers, and that by this means our workers are gaining access to so many homes and hearts in those countries. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.34}

*Resolved*, That we consider the cause of health reform as one the world over, and that we extend the hand of sympathy and good cheer to the Rural Health Retreat, at St. Helena, California, in which is inculcated the same principles as in the Sanitarium at Battle Creek, Michigan, and that we are greatly pleased to learn of the progress which the former institution has made since its opening in the spring of 1885. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.35}

WHEREAS, The Health Retreat, though desirous to do all it can in giving charity treatment to the sick and worthy poor among us, cannot, while in its comparative infancy, do as is proposed by the parent Sanitarium, erect a charity hospital; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.36}

*Resolved*, That in the sense of this body, it should be aided in its humanitarian work by raising a charity fund to be used for the benefit of the afflicted poor who shall be properly recommended to the care of the institution, such fund to be called for in contributions from those inclined to give for so worthy an object. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.37}

WHEREAS, The two journals, *Good Health* and *Pacific Health Journal*, have each their mission to fill, and their appropriate sphere in which to work, the former being like an advanced reader and the latter a primer of simplified lessons; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.38}

*Resolved*, That we deem it expedient that the circulation of both these journals be encouraged as a means of arousing investigation of, and stimulating perseverance in, the cause of health reform. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.39}

At a meeting of the International Tract Society, the following resolutions of approval of our papers were passed:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.40}

WHEREAS, The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is our pioneer missionary journal, and finds favor with the people, while it conveys to them the principles of the Third Angel’s Message; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.41}

*Resolved*, That we recommend to State Tract and Missionary Societies to take as large clubs as they can use to advantage, and that we urge all ministers, colporters, and the members of local missionary societies, to make constant and strenuous effort to place the paper in the hands of the people. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.42}

WHEREAS, The rapid growth of the National Reform Association, and its widespread evil influences, show how dangerously near it is to assured success; and, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.43}

WHEREAS, We know the destructive consequences that will surely attend the success of that movement; and, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.44}

WHEREAS, The *American Sentinel* is devoted to the work of exposing the evil that lurks in that movement; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.45}

*Resolved*, That we deem it to be the duty of our State and local societies, ministers, missionary workers and our people generally, to bring the *Sentinel* to the attention of all classes of people, but particularly to lawyers, legislators, and other men of public affairs. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.46}

Concerning the matter of the first resolution, Sister White related the circumstances under which the SIGNS was started, and why it was started. She stated that it has a work to do that no other paper can accomplish. The *Review and Herald*, which is a church paper, should be taken and ready by every church member; but the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a missionary journal, and should go to every part of the world. She stated that our people could not get along without either one of these papers, but that every family should have them both. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.47}

Concerning the *Sentinel*, it was stated that the publishers hoped to see the circulation increased to 500,000 copies during the year 1888. For the year 1887 there has been printed to total of 255,000 copies, which is nearly double the number printed during the previous year. One man, a total stranger to us and to our work, got hold of one copy of the *Sentinel*, and wrote to the office ordering nineteen copies of the November number to be sent to as many different addresses. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.48}

Thursday forenoon, November 24, a meeting of the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Society was held. This is the Battle Creek College Association, having no jurisdiction over other schools or colleges of the denomination. The following resolutions, which were adopted, will give the best idea of the work done:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.49}

*Resolved*, That the increased facilities afforded by our College are a source of renewed gratitude to God, and this action of the managers of the institution deserves our hearty approval. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.50}

*Resolved*, That we appreciate the efforts of the managers of the College to place it in a condition to better fulfill the object of its establishment, and pledge ourselves, and ask our people, to sustain our Trustees in their laudable efforts thus far made. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.51}

WHEREAS, Efforts have been made by the managers of Battle Creek College and of our other educational institutions to organize a system of manual training in connection with these schools; and, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.52}

WHEREAS, We regard this effort as being in harmony with the will of God in relation to these institutions, as well as in harmony with the conclusion reached by the most advanced scientific educators of the age; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.53}

*Resolved*, That we express our approval of the efforts which have been made, and of the results which have already been attained, and urge that these efforts be continued in the same direction, and that advance steps be made as rapidly as experience and the development of this line of educational work may indicate as necessary; and, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.54}

WHEREAS, There is general ignorance, and, on the part of many, an entire misconception of the aims and purposes of manual training in the education of the youth; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.55}

*Resolved*, That the Trustees be requested to prepare for general circulation a pamphlet on this subject; and, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.56}

*Resolved*, That when this pamphlet is prepared, the Trustees of this society shall make an effort to place a copy in the hands of every Sabbath-keeping family. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.57}

WHEREAS, In some cases students, parents, and guardians feel a little inimical to the plan of working a portion of the time, either in domestic affairs or at some trade; and, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.58}

WHEREAS, Its object is to better fit all students for the ordinary duties of life as well as the highest Christian culture; and, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.59}

WHEREAS, This object can be attained in no better way; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.60}

*Resolved*, That we entreat all our people and the students that may come to the institution to try to realize the great benefit to be derived from the manual training department, and encourage the good work by every proper means. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.61}

WHEREAS, We recognize a healthy condition of the body as essential to the best mental and moral development; and, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.62}

WHEREAS, It is a recognized fact that a large share of the causes which occasion disease and premature decay of the physical powers in adults originate in childhood and youth, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.63}

*Resolved*, That we urge upon the managers of all our educational institutions the importance of giving special attention to the physical training of students under their charge, and that it be considered the duty of managers and teachers to secure as far as possible an improvement in the health and physical condition of the students as well as in their mental and moral conditions. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.64}

*Resolved*, That the study of health and temperance principles and of hygiene as held among us should be introduced into all our schools and made compulsory upon all students pursuing a regular course of study and who are not already proficient in these branches. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.65}

WHEREAS, Many of our people are located at long distances from any of our denominational schools, involving large expense in sending children to enjoy the advantages of these schools; and, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.66}

WHEREAS, It is evidently unwise for parents to send young children away form their care, even though it be to our schools; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.67}

*Resolved*, That we favor the establishment of local or church schools for the purpose of teaching the common branches, and that we recommend the managers of the College to give special attention to the training of teachers for such schools. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.68}

The remaining items of interest will be given on the last page. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.69}

The Committee on Distribution of Labor made the following additional recommendations at the last meetings, which were adopted:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.70}

That Russel Hart, of Battle Creek, Mich., go to Norway to assist in the Publishing house in Christiania for a year or so, until efficient help be educated. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.71}

That Sister Carrie Mills go to Portland to take a position in the school and Bible work. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.72}

That Elder Oscar Hill and wife go to Alabama and Mississippi to labor. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.73}

That furnishing labor to the Pacific islands be referred to the General Conference Committee, with the recommendation that someone be selected to supply the urgent wants of that field. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.74}

The twenty-sixth annual session of the General Conference practically closed at midnight, November 27, although the last meeting, which closed at that hour, adjourned to Saturday evening, December 3, when some special matters will be discussed. The Conference session has been a most enjoyable season to the members of the Oakland church, who have felt it a rich treat to have the privilege of entertaining our good brethren and sisters from the East, and in listening to the proceedings of the various societies. The weather throughout has been most favorable for the meetings, no ran having yet fallen. The deliberations of the Conference and other associations were characterized by great harmony and good feeling, and the discussion on the various points that were considered demonstrated the fact that men may differ in opinion and still retain brotherly love for one another. We believe that the holding of the General Conference in California this year will prove to have been a wise move. We trust that, aside from the measures decided upon in the session, lasting good may accrue, not only to the California Conference, but to all the Conferences that were represented. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.75}

The following important resolutions were passed at the General Conference:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.76}

WHEREAS, Our growing publishing interests in different parts of the world are one in purpose, and should ever be united in action; therefore, {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.77}

*Resolved*, That this Conference appoint a standing committee of thirteen persons for the coming year, to be known as the Book Committee, whose duty it shall be to labor for the improvement and wider circulation of our denominational literature. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.78}

*Resolved*, That is shall be the duty of this committee to hold a meeting in the spring and another in the autumn of the year, at the most convenient place for the majority of the committee to meet. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.79}

*Resolved*, That questions as to the necessity of establishing new printing offices, the duties and privileges of the smaller offices now in operation, and all questions that may arise between our publishing associations or general agents, shall be referred to this committee, whose decisions, after receiving the approval of a majority of the General Conference Committee, shall be considered as the voice of this body. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.80}

This committee, as elected for the coming year, is composed of the following persons: Geo. I. Butler, U. Smith, W. C. White, J. H. Kellogg, C. Eldridge, F. E. Belden, C. H. Jones, E. J. Waggoner, E. M. Morrison, J. G. Matteson, F. W. Farnsworth, R. M. Kilgore, A. T. Robinson. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 728.81}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 13, 46.**

E. J. Waggoner

According to the credentials and licenses issued, there will be fifty-seven General Conference laborers in the field next year. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.1}

It is the unanimous opinion of the religious papers of the East that the action of the Personal Liberty League in demanding open saloons on Sunday afternoons, has stirred the people in New York and Pennsylvania “as never before.” And with every stir the National Sunday-law movement is increased in power and influence. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.2}

At the last meeting of the Conference the question was raised as to where the next session should be held. There was quite a lively competition over the matter, several States being anxious for the privilege of entertaining the delegates. After many propositions, and much discussion, it was finally voted to hold the next session at South Lancaster, Mass. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.3}

Considerable space in this number of the SIGNS is devoted to the General Conference, but we do not believe that our readers will complain of this. The matter which we present is of general interest, and may be read with profit by all. There is, however, besides the Conference business, a large amount of interesting and valuable matter on Bible subjects; as much, perhaps, as the ordinary reader can well digest before the next issues of the paper. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.4}

The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union has decided to make it a special point in their public and private prayers, to pray that the 54,000 preachers in this country “may all become total abstainers and advocates of prohibition.” It is a most pitiable thing that there should be any room, and much more that there should be any need, for such prayers. Think of its being necessary to pray in private and in public, that the preachers of the gospel should practice the principles which they profess to preach. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.5}

The managers of the Chautauqua studies have done themselves honor and the public untold good by placing upon their list of studies for the present class-year the “Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation.” We heartily commend this action of the Chautauqua managers, and congratulate the students. The use and influence of that book can never be anything but an unmixed good. We wish it might be studied in every home in the nation, or in the world for that matter. We are glad of the increased circulation that will be given to the book and to its sublime philosophy through the work of the Chautauqua circles. The book has been issued in a new edition and smaller size, and is sold at the low price of *sixty cents*. It can be had at the Pacific Press, this city. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.6}

Thanksgiving-day has come and gone. It was no doubt observed throughout the country as well as is usual on this annual occasion. The churches assembled in their usual places of worship, and gave thanks to God, and worshiped him from whom all blessings flow. The saloons got in their evil work, and did a flourishing business all day. Games, excursions, and festivities of all kinds went on with great *elat*. In San Francisco alone, 45,000 people attended the base-ball games. Yet with all this increased saloon traffic, and playing of games, and running to and fro, on this day specially appointed for worship and thanksgiving to God, we have heard not the slightest complaint of anybody’s worship being disturbed; while on Sundays there is not nearly so much of this noise, drunkenness, and festivity, and yet the complaints are almost universal from the leaders in the churches, that their worship is most sorely disturbed. Now why is this? Why is it that with all these things nobody’s worship is disturbed on Thanksgiving-day, while with not nearly so much of it on Sunday so many people’s worship is so much disturbed? Why is it that that which so greatly “disturbs” people’s worship on one day has no tendency at all in that direction on another day? We wish that somebody whose worship is disturbed on Sunday would enlighten us on this point. We have no idea, however, that any such will do it. The fact is that it is not at all Sunday worship, but is solely the Sunday *doctrine* that is disturbed. If the Sunday doctrine had any support in the word of God, there would be no complaints of disturbance of Sunday worship. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.7}

**“Where They Draw the Line” The Signs of the Times, 13, 46.**

E. J. Waggoner

The New York *Observer*, in commenting on the Personal Liberty League Sunday contest, says that the League “has undoubtedly secured enough representatives of its kind to make it certain that an attempt will be made to have a law enacted in accordance with its wishes, that is, a law opening the saloons, museums, and concert gardens on the Sabbath.” Yet the *Observer* thinks the League will not succeed in getting such a law, because there are so many who, although they have no regard for Sunday as a religious institution, are “quick to come to the defense of the day when its existence is threatened by the rum power.” And then it confesses the very thing which we have often pointed out, that is, that is not the solution itself, but only the *Sunday* saloon that is opposed. The *Observer* says”- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.8}

“Many have said, in effect, that they will bear any thing from the saloon but this, the giving up of the Sabbath [Sunday]. They draw the line at that.” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.9}

Yes, they will bear anything from the saloon but this. They will bear the drunkenness, the murdering, the woe, the ruin, the devastation, and the universal deviltry generally wrought by the saloon. They will bear it day and night, year in and year out, they will bear it without a murmur or a word of objection or complaint. In the estimation of these people all these evils can be carried on entirely consistently with the principles of civil and moral right. But if the saloon shall attempt to carry on its work on Sunday, then the saloon, which is all right all other days, suddenly becomes a thing laden with iniquity, and totally unworthy of any place in the world-till Sunday is passed. With all this the opinion of the *Independent* also chimes. It says:- {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.10}

“The people of this country want a quiet and orderly Sabbath [Sunday], and in order to have it they must shut up the groggeries.” {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.11}

But they don’t propose to shut up the groggeries except on Sunday. “They will draw the line at that.” But why? Why? Why do they not draw the line at the *right* point of no solution at all? Ah! they want the saloon and Sunday too, and it is a very worthy companionship. {SITI December 1, 1887, p. 736.12}

**“The Spirit of Antichrist. No. 3” The Signs of the Times, 13, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

We shall now proceed to show that the teaching of the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul, has from the very beginning been accompanied by sin, and that it is the cause of all the sin that has ever cursed this earth. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.1}

When God placed our first parents in Eden, everything was perfect and pure. Adam and Eve were sinless. They had full liberty to enjoy the fruit of every tree that was pleasant to the sight and good for food, with the exception of one tree in the midst of the garden, which was a test of their loyalty to God. Into this garden of delight the tempter came. “Now the serpent [“which is the devil, and Satan,” Revelation 20:2] was more subtil than any beast of the field, the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” Genesis 3:1. In this question we find a covert insinuation against the justice of God. The idea is this: “Is it so, that God has said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? Has God been so arbitrary as to thus curtail your happiness?” There was an attempt to make Eve feel that she was being wronged, in being deprived of the fruit of that tree, and that she was not treated with the consideration due to so noble a creature. She replied that God had said that they should not eat of the tree, nor touch it, lest they die. Satan then replied:- {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.2}

“Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Genesis 3:4, 5. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.3}

It is unfortunate for the advocates of the natural immortality of the soul, that the very first announcement of it that was ever made was made by the father of lies. We have already demonstrated from the Scriptures that the teaching that man can have immortality without Christ is the spirit of antichrist, and here we find that the doctrine was introduced into the world by the very antichrist himself. If we study Satan’s words a little more closely we shall find that they were identical with the teachings of modern Spiritualism, and that the first Spiritualist lecture ever delivered was given by the devil in the garden of Eden, with only Eve for an audience. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.4}

When Satan affirmed that Adam and Eve were by nature immortal, by saying, “Ye shall not surely die,” he added, “For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” This was as much of a lie as the other, and was a companion to it, and a necessary consequence of it. Our common version does not give the full force of the original. We know not why the translators rendered it, “Ye shall be *as gods*,” for the Hebrew plainly reads, “Ye shall be *like God*, knowing good and evil.” This lets in new light on the subject. It shows that Satan recognized the fact that immortality is an attribute of Deity, and that the possessor of it must necessarily be his own judge of right and wrong. It was by this lie that Satan deceived Eve, and caused her to sin. Notice that the assertion of immortality and of the power of judging for themselves of right and wrong, constitutes the one deception; and bear in mind that it was this claim of natural immortality for man which “brought death into the world, and all our woe, with loss of Eden.” Therefore we have proved the proposition that the doctrine of the natural immortality of man is the cause of all the wickedness that has ever cursed our earth. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.5}

We may go back even further than this, to the time when sin first entered the universe, and we shall find that the cause of it was pride, and the claiming of attributes that belong to God alone. In Isaiah 14:12-14 we read the following description of the fall of Satan:- {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.6}

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.” {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.7}

This gives in plain language the sin of Satan. He aspired to be equal with God; he coveted the position that belonged only to the divine Word the Son of God; and there the spirit of antichrist first sprung into existence. Turn now to Ezekiel 28:11-19, and read a description of Satan’s former position in Heaven, and the cause of his fall. Satan here appears with the title, “King of Tyrus.” He is so called because he is “the god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4), and the one who actually holds the reins of power in all wicked governments, such as that of Tyre. The man who held the position of the king of Tyre is in the prophecy called “the prince of Tyrus” (Ezekiel 28:1-10), because he was secondary to Satam, who controlled him. Moreover it is certain that verses 13-15 could refer to no one but one who had been in Heaven. Now read the description:- {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.8}

“Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold; the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned; therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God; and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness; I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.” {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.9}

Thus we learn that pride, and undue regard for self, forgetfulness of the fact that no one can have anything except from God, and is a desire to be equal, in some respects at least, to God, led to Satan’s fall. And this cause of his fall was exactly the same in nature as that by which he fell; and it is the identical principle by which Satan has perpetuated sin in the world until the present time. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.10}

From the fall of our first parents, every great system of error has been based upon that first great falsehood uttered by Satan. How natural that it should be so! Error is simply a departure from God, a failure or refusal to acknowledge him as of supreme authority. But just in proportion as men fail to recognize the claims of God, they usurp the place which he should occupy. That is, to the extent that they neglect God, they follow their own ways, and thus to that extent they make themselves gods, and worship themselves. But, as we have already seen, the claim that man is immortal is also a claim that he is a god. Thus the two things go together. The doctrine of natural immortality, being a gross error, leads to the commission of the sins which are natural to man. It was the first cause of sin. But if there should be a people who had no belief of any kind concerning man’s nature and his future condition, but who were following their own inclinations, they would soon develop the idea that they were immortal. And this would be because pride, which is *always* present in the natural heart, would lead man to feel that there could be no being in the universe greater than himself. As Gibbon aptly expresses it (“Decline and Fall,” chap. 1.), “it must be confessed that in the sublime inquiry [concerning the nature of man], their reason had often been guided by their imagination, and their imagination had been prompted by their vanity. When they viewed with complacency the extent of their own mental powers, when they exercised the various faculties of memory, of fancy, and of judgment, in the most profound speculations, or the most important labors, and when they reflected on the desire of fame, which transported them into future ages, far beyond the bounds of death and of the grave, they were unwilling to confound themselves with the beasts of the field, or to suppose that a being for whose dignity they entertained the most sincere admiration, could be limited to a spot of earth, and to a few years of duration.” And so dead man would be deified. W. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.11}

**“The Link Is Still Missing” The Signs of the Times, 13, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

A very zealous defender of the first-day sabbath has unearthed the following. It is not new, but it is just as good as new, for its extreme thinness has hindered its being used very much:- {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.12}

“Consider a few facts as to why the Jewish Christians did not immediately give up the observance of the seventh day. How carefully and gradually Jesus unfolded his new doctrines, even to the chosen apostles. To the multitudes he spoke only in parables, ‘as they were able to hear it.’ Mark 4:33. Had Jesus at once and plainly told the people the radical change which he had come to make in the Jewish system of worship, they would have killed him immediately. Even the apostles would have been horrified, and doubtless would all have left him. During all the ministry of our Lord, nothing stands out more prominently than the fact that he was gradually but cautiously preparing the minds of his disciples for the great change which his gospel was destined to make in the worship of God.... Just before Jesus died, he said: ‘I have yet many things to say and to you, but he cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.’ John 16:12, 13.” {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.13}

Well, now, what a pity that, after spending the three years and a half of his ministry in “cautiously preparing the minds of his disciples for the great change which his gospel was destined to make in the worship of God,” he did not once even so much as intimate to them what that change was to be! Surely this was an excess of caution. True, indeed, he spoke to the multitude in parables, but to his own disciples he spoke plainly. Many things he said to them that would not have been listened to by the mass of the Jews. But he gave his disciples the following commands and exhortation, which would insure that everything that he said should have the widest publicity:- {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.14}

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19, 20. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.15}

“If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Fear them not therefore; for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.” Matthew 10:25-27. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.16}

It is certain that the disciples followed this counsel, for but a few weeks after the resurrection, Peter stood before the entire Jewish Sanhedrim, and boldly charged those men with the murder of Jesus. When threatened with imprisonment and stripes, the apostles plainly told the Jews that they should pay no attention to their commands not to preach, but should obey God rather than men. And that they did proclaim all that they had learned of Jesus, is shown by the words of Paul, who, like the rest, had seen the Lord and learned of him. To the Ephesian elders he said: “I kept back nothing that was profitable until you;” “wherefore I take you to record this day, that I impure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” Acts 20:20, 26, 27. This he did in the face of death, showing that he was not deterred by fear, yet never a word did he say about the change of the Sabbath. Why this silence on so important a subject? {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 742.17}

If anything more were needed to show that a disregard for the law of God is always accompanied by a low estimate of Christ’s character and work, it is shown in the statement that Christ refrained from telling the Jews about the change of the Sabbath, for fear that they would kill him. Such a base charge could not be made except by one whose disregard for the law has blunted at all his finer sensibilities. The idea that Jesus, who came to earth for the express purpose of giving his life for man, should, through fear of man, keep back part of his message, is too absurd for sober comment. Read the eighth chapter of John, and learn how he called the Jews liars and murderers, and charged them with being children of the devil; read the denunciations in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, and then try to imagine him cowering before their hard looks, to the extent that he would not tell them necessary truth. Such an imputation indicates that the one making it regards Christ as less than man. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 743.1}

It is indeed true that Christ said that he had many things to say which the disciples could not then bear; but if the change of the Sabbath was one of those things, how does it happen that the Holy Spirit did not reveal it, so that it could appear in some of the writings of the apostles? Is it claimed that the Holy Spirit did gradually lead the church into Sunday-keeping? Where’s the proof? If the church was gradually led to that practice, it must be that at first only a very few were led to that practice. Where are their credentials? What have they to show that *they* were led by the Spirit more than others? Nothing but their own assertion, even as “the church” can give nothing but its own assertion to show that it is led by the Spirit in its practice of Sunday-keeping. But if we are to believe every man who claims to be led by the Spirit, we shall have to accept all the errors that flood the earth. No, we will “try the spirits, whether they are of God,” and we can try them by nothing except the law and the testimony. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 743.2}

It would seem as though the frantic efforts of the Sunday advocates to find something to support their cause, ought in itself to be sufficient to show thinking persons its inherent weakness. Never did evolutionists search more eagerly for the “missing link” than do the advocates for Sunday for some direct evidence to show that the Sabbath has been changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. They leave no doubt but that the change was made, only both Jesus and his apostles neglected to say anything about it. We appeal to candid people, who desire to know and obey the truth, if the fact that the Bible nowhere mentions the change of the Sabbath, nor intimates that any change was made, nor commands anybody to keep the first day of the week, is not sufficient evidence that the Sabbath never was changed by divine authority, and that the Lord did not design that anybody should ever keep the first day of the week. Shall we be Bible Christians? If not, can we be Christians at all? W. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 743.3}

**“General Review” The Signs of the Times, 13, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

There being no set lesson for this date, we present a few fragmentary notes on certain portions of the lessons that have been studied during the quarter. Some of the first lessons were records of notable miracles performed by Jesus. These were performed in response to faith exercised by the individual, and should serve to direct our minds to the power of faith. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews gives a list of things that have been done through faith, and the inquiry might naturally arise, Whence does faith derive this extraordinary power? The answer will be found in an examination of what faith is, which we can give only in the briefest manner. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 746.1}

Faith is confidence in another. It is a giving up of one’s own ideas and will, to some other who is thereby acknowledged to be superior. It is trust, such as the innocent child reposes in its parents’ word. Now anybody knows that whenever such confidence is reposed in any person, it always produces a certain degree of consideration for, or tenderness toward, the trusting one. The traveler who is appealed to for guidance by a fellow-traveler, feels an interest in that other; the fact that a stranger has confided in him makes him feel kindly toward the unknown one. Even the hardened ruffian could scarcely find it in his heart to do harm to one who, trusting to his honor, would unhesitatingly cast himself upon him for protection. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 746.2}

Now whatever good things there are in man, are from above, and exist in the heart of God as much more strongly than in the heart of man, as God is greater than man. So when Abraham, with child-like trust, believed God when he made a promise which to all human appearances could never be accomplished, his simple belief “was counted unto him for righteousness.” It is not irreverent for us to say that such trust touched the heart of God, and made him feel especially tender toward Abraham. Faith accomplished what nothing else could. And let it be remembered that there is good reason for this. Perfect faith implies perfect worship. Faith and humility are inseparable. The greater one’s faith in another, the lower his opinion of himself. So that perfect faith in God, such as Abraham exhibited, implied perfect willingness to do whatever God required of him. Such faith is as powerful to-day as it ever was. It suffices to secure pardon for sin, even as it did for Abraham, and nothing but such faith will secure pardon. The cleansing of a sinner from the defilement of sin is the greatest of all miracles, and it is one that is daily being performed in response to faith. Whenever God sees such trust and submission in the heart of anyone, nothing that that one can ask for can be denied. Then who would not pray, “Lord, increase our faith”? {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 746.3}

Jesus said to his disciples, on one occasion, “Truly the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few.” This suggests the query, Who are the laborers? and how do they stand related to the work of Christ? Their relation to Christ is most intimate. Christ is the great source of light. “In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,” and “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” His disciples derive the light from him, and are, in turn, to be the light of the world. See Matthew 5:14. Thus they are sharers in Christ’s work. He himself said to the Father: “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” John 17:18. Thus the disciples become “workers together with God,” and prepared, by the only means possible, to receive the cheering words, “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” Only those who are sharers in Christ’s work can be partakers of his joy. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 746.4}

The lesson for November 20 is a most important one. In it occurs these words: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30. There is no freedom outside of Christ. The Christian is the only man on earth who really has his liberty. Sin and lawlessness are a grievous yoke of bondage, and Christ alone can break this yoke from off our necks. Anarchists fight against all law; they feel that something is galling their necks, and they imagine that it is the law, and so they would fain abolish law. But that which galls them is the yoke of sin which they bear. The law of God in Christ Jesus is not a grievous yoke. There is no man so much at liberty as the one who keeps the law of God, and this can be kept only when one is in Christ. The one who perfectly obeys the law never feels it. Said the psalmist: “I will walk at liberty; for I seek thy precepts.” Psalm 119:45. And our Saviour set forth the whole matter in the following words: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” John 8:34-36. Before this he had said: “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” Verse 32. This agrees with the other, for Christ is the truth. John 14:6. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 746.5}

The parables in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew seem to be the most expressive of any in the Bible. The parable of the tares utterly refutes the comparatively modern idea of a temporal millennium. In the parable, the man who owned the field is represented as saying to his servants who asked if they should not pull up the tares: “Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.” {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 746.6}

In the interpretation of the parable, the field is declared to be the world, the good seed the children of the kingdom, the tares the children of the devil; the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels. The Saviour then says: “As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.” Matthew 13:40-43. This declaration is so plain that no comment can make it plainer. It shows conclusively that there is never on this earth a time of righteousness and peace until the wicked have been destroyed, and that the punishment of the wicked and the reward of the righteous do not take place until the coming of Christ and the end of the world. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 747.1}

The parable of the net that was cast into the sea (Matthew 13:47-49) seems to be of a little different nature from that of the wheat and tares. There would be no object in giving two parables in close connection, to teach exactly the same thing. In this chapter many parables are given illustrative of the kingdom of Heaven, because all its features could not possibly be represented in one parable. The parable of the net is, we think, more limited in its application than the parable of the tares and the wheat. The latter represents the good and bad as living together in the world until the final Judgment; the former represents both good and bad persons as being taken into the church, and remaining there until they shall be separated by the decisions of the Judgment. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 747.2}

Notice that in this parable there is first a gathering out from the sea, which doubtless represents the world. Into the net are gathered a quantity of fishes out from the great mass of fishes. The net contains both bad and good. When it is drawn ashore, the catch is sorted, the good being preserved, and the bad thrown away. Even “so shall it be at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; then shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” The company here brought to view by the fishes in the net is a company of supposed good people, of those whom it is proper to expect that they will be good. The church is just such a company. According to their profession, all the members of the church ought to be good; but they are not. Many that say, “Lord, Lord,” will be cast out at the last day. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 747.3}

No one has any reason to feel safe, simply because his name is on the church roll. The gospel net gathers in both bad and good. This does not mean that any of those whom it gathers in are good in the sense that they are fit for translation, but that they are composed of good material out of which to make saints. The work of the gospel, after it has gathered them out, is to transform them fully into the divine image. But some are bad; they will not be transformed; they resist the good influences that are cast around them, and so grow worse instead of better. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 747.4}

This parable takes all the point out of the infidel cavils concerning church members who act dishonestly or who fall into gross immorality. Christ has told us beforehand that there will be false professors. Therefore there is no point to the cavil that infidels love to make against religion, when some professors show that they are unsanctified in life. We learn that both bad and good are drawn into the gospel net. The church is Christ’s school, and Christians are learners of Christ, striving to follow the divine pattern, until at last they may come “unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” Who has any right to say that the church is a failure, because it contains some dull scholars, and some who refuse to perform their allotted tasks? We judge a school and a teacher, not by the dull, the lazy, or the obstinate pupils, but by those who follow the instruction given them. If those who obey orders show improvement, we say that the school is a good one, and the teacher competent; and we do not pass sentence of condemnation because those who refuse to obey are not benefited. So we must judge of the church of Christ and of Christianity, not by the lives of false professors, but by the lives of those who heed the example and teachings of Christ, and who yield themselves to the influence of the Holy Spirit. W. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 747.5}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 13, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

December 31 is the day of the Pope’s jubilee. Great preparations are being made for the celebrations on that day and forward, as long as there is anything to be made out of it. On that day he is to receive “the members of the international committees,” who will make him a present of 1,000,000 *lire*-$51,813.47. On January 4 and 5 he will receive the deputations from foreign countries, who will offer three presents. The United States and Canada send $200,000. January 6 the jubilee presents will be exhibited, and January 15 the Pope will make ten new Catholic saints. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.1}

In the *New Thought* of November 26, Prof. J. S. Loveland says:- {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.2}

“Nothing more clearly proves the mighty power of modern Spiritualism than the numerous methods in which it is and has been assailed. Open, direct assault has always resulted in victory for it, and defeat to its enemies. But when the assailants have been within the ranks, the result has been far different. The crusade, started some years since, on the plea of morality, against alleged free-love, has done more than all other things combined to cripple the Spiritualistic movement.” {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.3}

This, coming from a Spiritualist, is a damaging admission. If it is true that the crusade against free-love gave Spiritualism a check, it must be that Spiritualism thrives best in a free-love soil. What conclusion, then, must we draw from the fact that Spiritualism is at the present time making very rapid progress? {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.4}

Although there are no public meetings of the Conference the last week, it was a busy week for the delegates. There was a vast amount of committee work to be done, and this occupied the time of many of the delegates almost constantly night and day. Quite a large number made a trip to the College, at Healdsburg, and the Rural Health Retreat, at St. Helena, having a most enjoyable trip, while they were becoming better acquainted with our work on the coast. We very much desired to have our Eastern friends take this trip, that they might appreciate the situation here, and be able to aid us by their counsel. On the evening of the 3rd there was a meeting of the Conference, to attend to some unfinished business. Our relation to Sunday laws was the principal question of the evening, and a good-sized audience listened attentively to the discussion, which continued to a late hour. Immediately following this there was a final meeting of the Missionary Society. The body adjourned *sine die* about midnight. Some further details will be given later. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.5}

And now the delegates have all, with few exceptions, returned to their respective fields of labor. Sunday morning about a car load left, and Monday morning two cars were filled. Others had found it necessary to leave immediately after the practical adjournment one week previous. Thus has closed a most interesting and profitable session of the General Conference. If the work planned at this gathering shall be prosecuted with earnestness and faithfulness, we believe that a long step in advance will be seen all along the line. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.6}

Not by any means the least important thing gained by this Conference is the strengthening of the ties that bind the different fields of labor together. We believe that all the delegates feel more than ever before that the work is one, that natural divisions, as oceans and mountain chains, cannot make divisions among those who are laboring in the cause of God, and that since we are all laboring in one common cause, our various interests are all one. As for the Oakland church, it has enjoyed a rare privilege in entertaining our brethren and sisters from the East, and in thus becoming intimately acquainted with them. We part from them with sincere regret; our prayers follow them as they journey to their homes. And as we resume our accustomed labors, feeling added responsibilities as a consequence of this meeting, we are strengthened with the belief that our brethren are praying for our success, as we are for theirs. Prayers for the success of the general work will be more intelligently offered now than ever before. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.7}

A short time ago, among other instances of a like nature, we mentioned the case of Jacob Sharp, the New York briber, how it had been carried up from court to court on appeal after appeal, until it had reached the Court of Appeals, and how preparations were being made to carry it to the United States Supreme Court if the Court of Appeals has rendered its decision, and it reverses all the decisions and actions of the courts below, in the case. The old criminal now walks out of jail on $40,000 bail, to appear, perhaps, sometime for a new trial, when the whole process must be gone through with again. And all this because he has money enough to warp his wicked way through the courts of the State, and exhaust the course of legal procedure. All that a man has to do now is only to be sure that he steals enough to enable him to follow this process and he is safe. Law now is only applicable to the poor; it is but the plaything of the rich. These things cannot long continue so; at this rate the whole fabric of civil society must soon fall. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.8}

The *Interior* says:- {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.9}

“When George Washington was presented with his little hatchet, his fingers ached to cut something with it. It is admitted that George was a good little boy, and meant no harm by chopping down the cherry tree. It has been so ever since. When power is put into an American parvenu’s hands-and we are all parvenus in this country, more or less-his fingers burn to exercise it, and if there is no useful work in sight he is sure to do mischief-and is very liable to anyway. If he has the self-confidence of the combined egotism and inexperience, he is irrepressible in his ugliness of purpose.” {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.10}

This is just the position we take with reference to the National Reformers. There are very many good people among them. There are many well-meaning persons who are anxious to see laws enacted for the better observance of Sunday. They say that they do not wish to infringe in the least upon the rights of those who keep the seventh day, and we give them credit for honesty of purpose. But they don’t know what they would do if they had the power. As the boy who has a brand new, sharp knife, cannot rest content until he has tried its edge, so the man who comes into the possession of power to which he is unaccustomed, must needs test his new toy to see how it works. He may not mean any harm, but power is a very dangerous tool in the hands of an inexperienced person. Keep every semblance of power to persecute for conscience’s sake out of the hands of even the best of men, if you would have religious liberty. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.11}

**“A New Book” The Signs of the Times, 13, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Pacific Press Publishing House has just issued a new book that is of special interest to all Bible students. It is entitled “Sacred Chronology,” and “The Peopling of the Earth.” The “Sacred Chronology” is a revised reprint of “Bliss’s Analysis of Sacred Chronology,” first printed in 1850. It is the best treatise on the subject of the Bible chronology that there is. It has the advantage of being later than all the others, and the additional advantage that it establishes the dates of the events of the Bible, by the words of the Bible itself. It consists of three parts:- {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.12}

First, in explanation of what chronology is, with full explanation of the different cycles, epochs, periods, and eras, such as the Julian Period, the Era of the Olympiads, the Roman Era, the Christian Era, etc. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.13}

Second, the chronology of the Bible, given in the words of the Bible itself, from creation till the writing of the book of Revelation, A.D. 98. With this also there are given the following tables: (1) A table of dates from Adam to Aaron; (2) a table of the times of the judges; (3) a comparative table of the kings of Israel and Judah from the division of the kingdom at the death of Solomon to the accession of Jehu; (4) a like table from the accession of Jehu to the fall of Samaria. By these tables in addition to the text, the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah are made so plain that anyone can easily understand their relation. To many it is one of the most perplexing parts of the Scriptures to get a clear understanding of the times and the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah, as given in the books of Kings. This little treatise with its tables relieves the subject of all difficulty. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.14}

Third, is an essay on the chronology of the patriarchal age, vindicating the faithfulness of the Hebrew text as against the claims of the Samaritan and Septuagint versions. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.15}

“The Peopling of the Earth” is a little treatise of fifty-two pages, containing a series of historical notes on the tenth chapter of Genesis. Beginning with the text (Genesis 9:19), “These are the three sons of Noah; and of them was the whole earth overspread,” the sons of Noah and their sons and grandsons, as given in the tenth chapter of Genesis, are sketched in their history as they overspread the whole earth. The matter is given in an easy, running narrative of the nature of which some idea may be gathered from the statement of a gentleman who said that he had read it, and was really interested in it, when he was seasick. And everybody knows who has ever had any experience in that direction, that a thing of any kind must be intensely interesting to find any favor with a person who is seasick. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.16}

The book altogether-“Sacred Chronology” and “The Peopling of the Earth”-contains 300 pages and is almost invaluable to any diligent student of the Bible. The price, too, places it within the reach of all. Bound in cloth, $1.00; sheep, $1.50; full morocco, $1.75. Every minister, mission worker, Sabbath-school teacher, and college student ought to have a copy. Send for one and study it. {SITI December 8, 1887, p. 752.17}

**“The Spirit of Antichrist. No 4” The Signs of the Times, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

If we examine the heathen world, we shall find that the deception by which Eve fell was the same by which they plunged into abominable idolatries. Pride, the exaltation of self to the place of Deity, resulted in degradation; for “pride goeth before destruction,” and “when pride cometh, then cometh shame.” Paul also is authority for the statement that when one is “lifted up with pride,” he is in danger of falling “into the condemnation of the devil.” 1 Timothy 3:6. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.1}

Although there was heathenism centuries before the time of Plato, we may take the heathenism of his day as a type of all, since it was he who first systematized the so-called philosophy of the heathen. Everybody knows that one of the cardinal points of Plato’s philosophy was the theory of the immortality of the soul; but perhaps comparatively few realize that this doctrine of his sprung directly from the idea that the soul of man is itself supreme, a part of God. We quote the following concerning his teaching:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.2}

“There is no doctrine on which Plato more frequently or more strenuously insists than this,-that soul is not only superior to body, but prior to it in point of time, and that not only as it exists in the being of God, but in every order of existence. The soul of the world existed first, and then it was closed within material body. The souls which animate the sun, moon, and stars existed before the bodies which they inhabited. The pre-existence of human souls is one of the arguments on which he relies to prove its immortality.”-*Prof. W. S. Tyler, of Amherst College, in Schaff-Herzog Cyclopedia*. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.3}

By the following quotation from Priestly’s “Heathen Philosophy,” it will be seen that this doctrine of the pre-existence of human souls, upon which Plato built his doctrine of their immortality, is in reality a claim that the soul is self-existent, or, in other words, that each soul is a god:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.4}

“‘Every soul,’ he says (Phoedrus) ‘is immortal. That which is always in motion is from eternity, but that which is moved by another must have an end.’ Accordingly he maintained the *pre-existence* as well as the *immortality* of the soul; and in the East these two doctrines always went together, and are always ascribed to Pythagorus; the soul and the body being supposed to have only a temporary connection, to answer a particular purpose. ‘The soul existed,’ he says (*Dr. Lea*, lib. 10), ‘before bodies were produced, and is the chief agent in the changes and the management of the body.’ Agreeably to this doctrine, Plato maintained that all the knowledge we seem to acquire here is only the recollection of what we know in a former state.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.5}

The heathen philosophy, therefore, was simply a deification of the human. The mind of man was made the “lord of itself and all the world beside,” a part of God, and consequently answerable only to itself. Now what was the result of this self-exaltation? The apostle Paul gives the answer. Speaking of the heathen, he says that they were without excuse,- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.6}

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.” Romans 1:21-25. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.7}

“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” Pride, which caused the fall of Satan, was at the bottom of their degradation. To be sure they had knowledge, and made great progress in the arts, but they attributed whatever knowledge they had to their own innate superiority. They looked within for everything, and began to worship themselves, because in their conceit they couldn’t imagine anything else in the universe so worthy of worship as themselves. Thus that which they did know contributed to their folly, because they cut themselves loose from the only source of wisdom. The light that was in them became darkness, and the darkness was very great. Now read a further consequence of their claim that they possessed the attributes of Deity:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.8}

“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful; who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” Romans 1:28-32. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.9}

Quotations from history might be given to any extent, to show that the first chapter of Romans does accurately describe the moral condition of the ancient heathen world; but they are not necessary to our present purpose. We merely wish to show that the working the spirit of antichrist is the same in all ages of the world; that since the elevation of man to an equality with Deity by claiming for him inherent immortality, was the cause of the moral degradation of the ancient heathen, the same thing in this age will result in the same way. Compare the quotation in the preceding paragraph with Galatians 5:19-21, and it will be seen that the two lists of sins are almost identical, and that when men became so swelled up with pride that they fancied themselves gods, and thus cut themselves loose from God, the abominable practices into which they fell were simply the outcroppings of their own human nature which they were worshiping instead of God. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.10}

But there are only too great opposing forces,-Christ and antichrist,-and when men cast off their allegiance to God, they necessarily enlist under the banner of Satan. And so while the heathen were exalting self, they were in reality worshiping the devil. It could not be otherwise. In harmony with this conclusion, are the words of Paul: “But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.” 1 Corinthians 10:20. The psalmist, also, describing the apostasy of the Israelites, says that they “were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols, which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils.” Psalm 106:35-37. From Leviticus 17:7 and Deuteronomy 32:15-7, also, we learn that when the Jews forsook the Lord, and practiced heathen worship, they sacrificed to devils. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.11}

Heathenism everywhere, and in all ages of the world, is simply some form of devil worship. The ancient heathen, like modern Spiritualists, consulted with “familiar” spirits, as we learn from Deuteronomy 18:9-12:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.12}

“When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord; and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.13}

The most noted of these places where the ancients consulted with familiar spirits were the oracles of Apollo, at Dodona, Delphi, and Trophonius, in Greece. The priests and priestesses who conveyed the message of these oracles to the people, would in these days be called mediums, clairvoyants, etc. It is well known that the philosopher Socrates had a familiar spirit, a *demon*, without whose advice he would do nothing. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.14}

From the *Gospel in All Lands* (September, 1887) we take the following extract concerning the religion of the inhabitants of Java:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.15}

“The native Javanese... are Mohammedans as much as anything. In former times they were Buddhists and Brahmins. They worship their ancestors, and seem to have gathered something from every system of religion with which they have come in contact. The number of the spirits worshiped is almost without limit. In nearly every place there is a patron spirit to whose influence the good or bad fortune of the village is ascribed.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.16}

Concerning the religion of the inhabitants of Ceylon, the same authority says:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.17}

“Buddha has a multitude of followers among the Cingalese. But mild and moral as his doctrines are, they have failed ‘to arrest man in his career of passion and pursuit,’ and many of his so-called followers have stolid indifference to religion of any form. ‘Yet, strange to say, under the coldness there are superstitious fires whose flames overtop the icy summits of Buddhist philosophy, and excite a deeper awe in the mind of the Cingalese. Hence it demon-worship, their earliest form of religion, is still extant. Devil-priests, on every domestic occurrence, and in their calamities, are called in, and their barbarous ceremonies performed. Devil-dancers are implicitly relied upon in times of sickness, and before the patient they personate the demon which is afflicting him, and spend the night in performing fiendish rights, and in the morning exorcise the demon and go away with the rich offering, praying that the life of the sufferer may be spared. Buddhist priests connive at this worship, and even practice it, because they cannot suppress it.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.18}

Like the Javanese, Chinese, also, as is well known, worship their ancestors, and their gods, like those of the heathen of Greece and Rome, are simply deified dead men and women, whose fame is thus perpetuated. Anybody who has been in a Chinese “Joss House,” has seen, among the images of supposed ancient heroes and sages, a “good devil” and perhaps a “bad devil,” whose favor must be gained, or whose wrath propitiated; and one can scarcely pass through a street in a Chinese village without seeing burning papers which are designed to drive the evil spirits away. And so if all the nations of heathendom were passed in review, it would be seen that the Scripture writers were correct in their statements that the heathen sacrifice to devils. W. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.19}

**“A Holy Day, Not a Holiday” The Signs of the Times, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Christian Church News* (Oakland) says:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.20}

“The Seventh-day Adventists believe that Saturday ought to be kept as a holiday of rest now by all Christendom, but they are not willing to affirm it openly and publicly.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.21}

Possibly the *News* thinks that it has warrant for such a statement; if so, we are happy to tell it, and others who may be equally misinformed, the exact truth about the matter. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.22}

In the first place let it be understood that Seventh-day Adventists hold to no belief which they are not willing to affirm openly and publicly. Such a charge is a little out of the usual order, for they are usually complained of as being too ready to urge their belief upon the attention of others. They hold to nothing which they are not willing to have brought to the light of day, and upon which they do not invite the freest criticism, believing that truth will survive every attack upon it, and will shine brighter for those attacks; and they do not wish to hold any doctrine which is not truth. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.23}

Secondly, it is a gross error to say that “Seventh-day Adventists believe that Saturday ought to be kept as a holiday of rest now by all Christendom.” Nothing in the world is further from their desire. They do believe that the seventh day of the week, commonly called Saturday, ought to be kept as the Sabbath of the Lord, not simply by all Christendom, but by all the world; the obligation rests upon the infidel and the heathen, as well as on the professing Christian, because when God said: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do ay work,” he addressed the whole world, and not any special class. “The Sabbath was made for man,” and therefore the obligation to keep it rests upon all mankind. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 758.24}

But Seventh-day Adventists do not believe that Saturday ought to be kept as a holiday by anybody. It is a *holy day*, made such by the Creator himself, and so it ought to be kept. To observe the seventh day as a holiday,-a day of amusement, joy, and gaiety,-would be to violate the commandment of God, and we not only *believe*, but we *know* that that commandment ought to be strictly observed by every person in the world. This we and all Seventh-day Adventists are willing and anxious to declare openly and publicly, at all times and in all places. Let it be forever remembered, however, that when we say that all men ought to keep the seventh day, we do not mean to intimate that they should be forced to do so, nor that anybody should attempt to force them to keep it. This follows as a natural consequence of the fact that the Sabbath is a holy day and not a holiday. Civil laws cannot make a holy day, neither can they enforce the observance of a holy day. If the State were to attempt to enforce the observance of a holy day, it would at the best succeed in making men hypocrites, but it could not secure the proper observance of the day. And since anything less than the proper observance of the Sabbath is sin, it is evident that for the State to attempt to enforce the observance of the Sabbath would be to strengthen men in sin, by making them believe that the outward observance of the Sabbath, which is all that the State could exact, is all that God requires. It would, in fact, be compelling men to sin. Therefore, even if Seventh-day Adventists were in the majority, which we are sure they never will be, we should be utterly opposed to any movement looking toward the enforced observance of the seventh day. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.1}

While we are free to declare our belief in regard to Sabbath, we are just as free to declare our sentiments in regard to Sunday. Sunday was from the beginning of its career only a holiday, the “wild solar holiday of all pagan times.” The Catholic Church adopted it, along with many other heathen customs, from the pagans, by which she so conciliated them that they gave her their allegiance; and the Protestant churches have received it as a legacy from the Catholic Church. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.2}

Since the most that can be said for Sunday is that it is only a holiday of the church, without any divine sanction whatever, there is no obligation resting upon anybody to keep it. It has no more sacredness than Monday or Tuesday, or any other working day of the week. This we are willing to affirm openly and publicly, and we have no fear that our statement will be disproved. But although Sunday is not a sacred day, it is a religious institution, an institution of the church. Therefore when the State makes laws enforcing its observance even as a holiday, it goes beyond its right. To compel men to observe Sunday is to compel them to commit sin; for men will not rest upon two days of the week, and if they are compelled to rest on Sunday, they are thereby forced to labor upon the Sabbath, thus disobeying the command of God. Moreover, even though men would observe both days, if their conscience would not allow them to disobey God, Sunday laws would still be iniquitous, because they tend to elevate Sunday above the other working days of the week. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.3}

Therefore we are willing to affirm openly and publicly that we are utterly and uncompromisingly opposed to Sunday laws of every kind and degree. We are opposed to them not because it would interfere with *our* rights as citizens, but because they are against the rights of every citizen. The Gospel gives to every man the fullest liberty of choice as to whether or not he will obey God. “Whosoever will, let him come,” is the gospel call, and this invitation carries with it the negative, that whosoever is not inclined may stay away from the waters of life. Now when the State makes laws concerning any establishment of religion, it cuts directly across this freedom of choice. It compels some to do that which their conscience tells them they ought not to do; it forbids others to change their practice when their conscience shall become enlightened; and compel others to conform to a religious practice, when they have no conscience at all in the matter. If anybody wishes a more explicit declaration of our position upon this matter, we are prepared to give it, and to answer any questions that may be asked. W. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.4}

**“Is It Temperance or Sunday?” The Signs of the Times, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Independent*, in its notice of the recent meeting of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, at Nashville, Tenn., makes the following comment on the resolution which was passed in favor of Sunday liquor laws:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.5}

“It is our opinion that the great fight against liquor will be made more successfully on a much broader platform than that of a Sunday law. It is possible to make so much of the Sunday feature of the law as to ensure the cause, and of this there is some danger.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.6}

The *Independent* is correct; if the fight against the liquor traffic is ever to be successful, it will have to be made on a basis much broader than that of a Sunday law. For although a Sunday liquor law might be secured, the liquor traffic would still be intrenched as strongly as ever, yes, even more strongly than ever. Perhaps this may not be apparent to all, for many imagine that to oppose the so-called Sunday liquor laws is to array one’s self on the side of the saloons, and against temperance. This can easily be shown to be an error. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.7}

In the first place, the passage of a Sunday prohibitory liquor law gives the liquor traffic a legal status on other days. It is true that it is not expressly declared that liquor selling is right on other days than Sunday; but the natural inference from law declaring it to be wrong to sell liquor on Sundays is that it is all right to sell it on other days. The mother says to her boy, “Johnnie, you must not play with your ball to-day; it is Sunday.” The only idea Johnnie would get would be that is wrong to play ball on Sunday; he certainly would never get the idea that it is not right to play ball at other times; and the mother would not expect him to. If the boy were doing anything that is wrong in itself, smoking, for instance, she would use different language. She would say, “You must not do that, my son;” and this she would say on Monday or Wednesday just the same as on Sunday. If she should say, “You must not smoke to-day; it is Sunday,” the boy would conclude at once that all the wrong consisted in doing the act on Sunday, but that his mother would not object to his smoking on any other day. Even, so to discriminate, and say that liquor shall not be sold on Sunday, is to say it in effect that liquor-selling is all right in itself on any other day than Sunday. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.8}

This idea is strengthened by the fact that those who oppose the “Sunday saloons” also oppose the Sunday newspaper, the Sunday railroad train, Sunday mails, etc., things which are perfectly legitimate in themselves. By classing the “Sunday saloon” with these other things, the professed temperance people lift it to the same level. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.9}

But it is argued by many that the Sunday prohibitory liquor law is a move in the right direction, and that it is best to take what they can get, hoping for more by and by. They say they expect to get prohibition some time, but they cannot get it all at once, and so they will take prohibition on one day. It is strange that the fallacy of this plea cannot be seen by everybody at a single glance. It is right here that we find the plainest kind of evidence that the Sunday liquor law is not a move in behalf of temperance, but is only a movement for the protection of Sunday. Suppose for a moment that the movement in this affair were all true temperance men,-men who believe that the liquor traffic ought to be prohibited because it is an evil, and only an evil, to society,-does anyone suppose that they would be content with closing the saloons on Sunday only? No; when once they had massed their strength sufficiently to close the saloons on one day in the week they would close them every day. If they want total prohibition, there is no reason on earth why they shouldn’t get what they want, if they have the power to secure prohibition one day in the week. With their hands once on the monster’s throat they would not relax their grasp until it was choked to death. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.10}

It matters not that many of those who strenuously favor a Sunday liquor law are honest in their intentions, and are really actuated by temperance principles, the fact remains that there are not enough of such ones to carry the thing, for if there were they would have absolute prohibition. Those who look no further than the protection of Sunday are largely in the majority. We say again that the securing of a Sunday prohibitory law is not a move in the direction of total prohibition, but rather against it; for the fact that a lot of professed temperance men have the power in their hands to prohibit the liquor traffic, and stop short with prohibiting it one day in the week, will give that traffic a prestige that it has never before had. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.11}

We conclude, therefore, that the whole thing centers around Sunday, and is prompted, with few exceptions, by no other motive than to protect that day from desecration. If any feel inclined to dispute this proposition still further, and claim that the only desire is to protect the homes of the people-that Sunday is a general holiday, and the saloons are allowed to keep open, the laboring men and the youth, being idle, will be enticed into them more than at any other time, we would call attention to the fact that the working men are at liberty from about 5 o’clock Saturday afternoon, and that from then until midnight they have seven hours’ holiday, during which time the saloons are in full blast, and still there is no attempt on foot to abolish the Saturday-night saloons. There is ample opportunity for the laborers to spend all their money in drink before Sunday morning, and too often this is done. If this is a “home-protection movement,” then let it cover all the time when homes are in danger. More than this, the youth are usually at leisure the whole of Saturday, yet the “temperance” zeal reaches no further than the suppressing the Sunday saloon. The more arguments men bring to bear to support the Sunday prohibitory law, the more is its real nature disclosed. We repeat, the movement is against temperance, rather than in its favor, and wholly in the interest of the Sunday. The following from the *Christian Statesman*, of December, 1887, will bear out this assertion. It occurs in the report of a national reform meeting in Philadelphia:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.12}

“The Rev. Dr. Barr showed how a consistent national Christianity would throw open to religious influence large classes of men and women who are now utterly inaccessible. For example, there are from six to ten thousand saloon-keepers in the city, who, from the very nature of their business, cannot be reached with the gospel. A Christian Government would abolish their business, and leave them free to be reached like other men.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.13}

This, of course, looks toward entire suppression, but the principle is the same. In a meeting in the interests of a Sunday law, held in Oakland last winter, Rev. Dr. Briggs complained that the churches were charged with the duty of instructing the people in morals, and then, on account of the absence of any Sunday law, the people were free to wander into all places of amusement, so that the churches could not get at them. And whenever any “Sunday temperance” movement is sifted to the bottom, this will be found to be the ultimate object. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.14}

The *Independent* is right; if the professed temperance people of the country want to make any real headway against liquor, they will have to build a much broader platform than Sunday laws; for when their Sunday laws shall have been passed, liquor will be here still, and more strongly intrenched than ever. W. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 759.15}

**“Catholics and Hungarians” The Signs of the Times, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

An assembly of Catholic Hungarians has voted an address to the Pope. It favors granting temporal power to him. Semi-official journals protest against the address, which they say does not represent the genuine opinion of the Hungarian Catholics. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 761.1}

**“The Week of Prayer” The Signs of the Times, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

We would again call the attention of our readers, especially of those who are in any way connected with the body of the Sabbath-keepers, to the week of prayer, which has already been referred to. December 17-24, inclusive, is the time appointed, and the day or evening following, being Christmas, is designated as the time for special offerings to be made to foreign missions. It is expected that during the week of prayer all the churches will hold meetings every day, or in the evening, if it is not possible for all the members to assemble in the day-time. For each day’s meeting a special article has been prepared. The subjects are the following:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 761.2}

For Sabbath, December 17, which is appointed as a fast-day, “The Importance of Devoting the Week of Prayer to the Special Work of Seeking God;” Sunday, December 18, “Steps by Which We place Ourselves in a Condition Where God Can Accept Us;” Monday, December 19, “The Blessing of God Brought to Us Through Faith;” Tuesday, December 20, “The Object of God’s Blessing, and How It Can Be Obtained;” Wednesday, December 21, “Missionary Work-in the Family, in the Neighborhood, and in the Church;” Thursday, December 22, “The Work in Great Britain and Scandinavia;” a Friday, December 23, “The Central European Mission;” Sabbath, December 24, “The Obligation, Privilege, and Blessing of Giving.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 761.3}

The Christmas exercises are expected to be such as shall harmonize with the spirit of the week of prayer. It is hoped that during that week all will have had such a sense of their dependence upon God, and of his abundant goodness, that they will feel it to be a very feeble expression of gratitude due, to give liberally for the missions, which are now languishing for want of means. It has been proposed that at the Christmas gathering, before the offerings are made, brief sketches of the different foreign missions be given; and a circular letter suggesting a programme for the evening, and giving statistics of the missions, has been prepared and sent out. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 761.4}

Concerning the propriety of making gifts instead of receiving them on Christmas, nothing need be said. The plan has been tested abundantly. Some have thought that the children would be disappointed to see a Christmas tree with nothing on it for them; but our experience is that they are much better satisfied when the donations are for some worthy enterprise, and they are allowed to share in the giving, than when they are the recipients. With the latter plan there is always more or less envy, because some are more highly favored than others, while in the proposed plan there is no chance for envy; a lesson of unselfishness is taught, and the children prove the truth of the saying that it is more blessed to give than to receive. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 761.5}

Sabbath-keepers who are isolated so that they cannot meet with others should spend the week of prayer in seeking God by themselves, following the course of the meetings as nearly as they can from a reading of the subjects. Their Christmas offerings may be sent to either of the Publishing Houses, or to the nearest Tract Society Secretary, and they will all be credited to the Foreign Mission Fund. W. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 761.6}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

The New York *Observer* has sent letters to 501 Congregational Churches in New England, asking how they stand concerning the doctrine of probation after death. Of the replies received, 430 express emphatic disapproval of the theory, and the *Observer’s* conclusion is that “not more than four to five per cent. of the churches of New England tolerate the hypothesis of *post-mortem* probation.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.1}

We have received from the publishing house in Battle Creek, Mich., a pamphlet of fifty-two pages, entitled, “Prophetic History of the World,” containing what we conceive to be an exposition of the seventh and eighth chapters of Daniel, in the Dutch language, and also an assortment of tracts in the same language. The tracts are the following: The Law and the Gospel-The Sabbath of the Bible-The Sanctuary of the Bible-The Sabbath made for Man-Seven Reasons for Sunday-keeping Examined-Which Day Do You Keep, and Why?-Is Man Immortal?-The Millennium-Who Changed the Sabbath?-The Sufferings of Christ-and two temperance tracts: The Curse of Our Nation, and Alcoholic Poison. We are glad that the Hollanders may now read the truth in their own language. People who are acquainted with any of that nationality should make a note of this. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.2}

The subject of the discourse by Dr. Barrows, pastor of the First Congregationalist Church, San Francisco, a few Sundays ago, was, “The Sunday Question-the Present Needs and Hopes Concerning It.” In this discourse he is reported to have said:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.3}

“Catholicity is needed to obtain a true solution to this question. All we can expect is a civil moral law. If the Catholics, the Protestants, and the Jews all ask for it, where is the Legislature that would refuse? A breadth of view is necessary which will drop out of sight all our minor, individual views, and will unite us for the one common cause. This question is of supreme importance in this country at the present time, and we know of no other which equals it, except the temperance question.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.4}

We will not at present comment on the anomaly of “a civil moral law,” but will ask special note to be made of the fact that Protestants are seriously proposing an alliance with Catholicism in order to influence legislation in favor of Sunday. Leaving aside all question as to whether or not Sunday should be observed as the Sabbath, is it not evident that somebody’s rights are going to be infringed when Protestants and Catholics unite to influence legislation? When did Rome ever combine with any power, except to her own advantage? Is it not time for somebody to be are aroused? {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.5}

The following news item we clip from the *Christian Union:—* {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.6}

“The Rev. Dr. J. B. Fulton is still delivering his series of lectures against Romanism, and was recently attacked by a mob in Biddeford, Maine, which stoned the hall and drove the lecturer away. Dr. Fulton, however, was returned to Biddeford, by invitation of the Protestant clergymen of that city and Saco, and has begun another series of lectures on the same subject.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.7}

The story is told that a poor shoemaker used to attend the theological controversies, which were conducted in Latin. When asked what benefit he derived from the discussions, since he knew nothing of the language, he replied that he could always tell which party was in the wrong, because that party always got angry. If we did not have any knowledge of Romanism, we should know that it is a gross error, because it always replies with violence to any attacks upon it. Truth never uses any arguments but those of sober reason. Whenever in a religious body attempts to use physical force in defense of its dogmas, it may be set down as a fact that it is utterly impossible to uphold those dogmas from the Bible. The same principle applies in the case of the attempts of professed Protestants to secure laws enforcing Sunday observance. It is because they cannot uphold it by the Bible as a religious institution, that they wish to have it enforced as a civil institution. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.8}

**“Excessive Conscientiousness” The Signs of the Times, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

What the *Independent* terms “a curious case of conscientiousness” has just developed in Dubuque, Iowa. The facts, as given, are these:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.9}

“The ladies connected with the management of the Iowa Home of the Friendless have been in the habit of having a great ball every year, to raise money for their institution. This year, owing to a series of revival meetings in the city, the date of the ball was postponed until it was expected that the meetings would be concluded. As the meetings, however, were to continue, and the excitement of the coming ball was distracting the attention of the young people, several of the clergymen offered to canvass for money for the Home, if the ball should be given up, and expressed the opinion that a larger amount would thus be raised. No notice was taken of this offer. Then a number of ladies, some of them interested in the Home, offered to give it a thousand dollars on the same condition, this being a considerably larger sum than the ball usually netted.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.10}

The ladies gave this generous offer “earnest and prayerful deliberation,” and then respectfully declined it, and the following is a part of their reason therefore:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.11}

“As a band of Christian women, working for a charitable institution, we cannot consistently, or in justice to ourselves, admit or assume for any consideration that this innocent amusement that we have for years provided as a means to help us in support of our charitable work, can be in any way inconsistent or detrimental to a Christian life or character.... We earnestly recommend these young converts and those that may feel that this or any other amusement or recreation will be a blemish on that higher and better life to which all these things must be subservient, to lean not on any human arm for counsel or support, but as individuals to search their own consciences in the sight of their heavenly Father, and he will give them strength to follow its dictates fearlessly and cheerfully. And it was further resolved that it is not too late to abandon the proposed ball, preparations having already proceeded too far in that direction, and in justice to those who have labored hard and given much valuable time in order to make a financial success, we cannot further consider the proposition of the committee.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.12}

The *Independent*, with fine sarcasm, says that “the sensitiveness of these ladies for the rights of those of their number who have labored to make the ball a success, is something touching.” But it seems as though a little conscientious fear of endangering the salvation of souls, would have given better evidence of the true spirit of Christianity. In this affair we have an instance of how people may delude themselves into thinking that they are conscientiously serving God, when their every act proclaims them “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.13}

**“Alden’s Manifold ‘Cyclopedia of Knowledge and Language” The Signs of the Times, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

To those who wish a cheap cyclopedia, and yet one which is sufficiently comprehensive for all practical purposes, we can heartily recommend this work, the first volume of which is before us. It is more than a mere cyclopedia, as the following extract from the Publisher’s Notice will show: “The ‘Manifold Cyclopedia’ undertakes to present a survey of the entire circle of knowledge, whether of words or of things, thus combining the characteristics of a cyclopedia and a dictionary, including in its vocabulary every word which has any claim to a place in the English language. It does not especially attempt originality of treatment, but aims rather to give the generally accepted views of the most eminent scholars of the world, upon all the topics discussed.” An excellent feature of the work is that the pronunciation of every name is indicated. The first volume contains 630 pages, and covers the ground from A to America. From this some idea can be gained as to the comprehensiveness of the work. The book is four inches by seven in size, single column, well illustrated. The price, 50 cents in cloth, and 65 cents in half morocco binding, with 10 cents additional for postage, places it within the reach of everybody. The volumes will be issued at intervals of about one month, and a specimen copy may be ordered and returned it not wanted. John B. Alden, publisher, 303 Pearl Street, New York. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 768.14}

**“Lesson Pamphlet” The Signs of the Times, 13, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

At the late session of the International Sabbath-school Association, the following recommendation by the Lesson Committee was adopted:- {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 784.1}

“That the lessons for 1888 be written immediately and, after approval by the executive Committee, that they be published in two pamphlets, of twenty-six lessons each, for the use of Sabbath-school officers and teachers.” {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 784.2}

The lessons for the first six months of 1888 are now ready, and orders for the first of the above-mentioned pamphlets may now be sent in. this pamphlet will also contain the lesson that has been prepared for the use of the Senior Division at the camp-meetings. Price, post-paid, 10 cents. Send orders to Pacific Press, Oakland, Cal. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 784.3}

It should be borne in mind that this pamphlet is only “for the use of Sabbath-school officers and teachers.” It is not designed for general circulation. Sabbath-school scholars will receive their lesson week by week as heretofore, and that is sufficient for their needs. But the Committee recognized the fact that it is often an advantage to teachers to know what is coming. by means of this pamphlet, moreover, ministers who are traveling from place to place visiting churches, and attending camp-meetings, may always be able to join with the school in the lesson for the day, although they may not have received any *Instructor*. Whenever a minister visits a school, the officers and teachers expect help from him, and valuable suggestions in regard to the lessons, and they have a right to expect this. But very often they are disappointed, because he “didn’t have any paper, and therefore couldn’t learn the lesson.” They will no longer have this excuse, and the schools may hereafter feel free to call upon a minister to teach a class whenever he visits them. {SITI December 15, 1887, p. 784.4}

**“Explaining Miracles” The Signs of the Times, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Many very good persons have in the past been zealous to explain the miracles of the Bible. Of late years the number of these zealous souls have been increasing. Their motive is a laudable one, for they think that if they can take out of the way of infidels some of the difficulties of the Bible, and thus remove their objections to that book, many will accept its teachings. But however honest the motive may be, it is certain that they are engaged in a thankless task. If they knew the cause of infidelity, they would not think to cure it by such methods; and if they would stop to consider, they would see that if it were possible to explain the miracles of the Bible, there would be no inducement for an infidel or anybody else to accept its teachings. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.1}

Miracles lie at the very foundation of the gospel, and are the principal part of its superstructure. The very existence of God is a miracle; the creation of the world was a miracle; the fact that it is upheld by the same word that brought it into existence, is a miracle; our own existence is a miracle; and the plan of redemption is a stupendous miracle. A belief in miracles underlies all knowledge, and all true science. The first element of knowledge is to perceive that things exist. Before any advancement whatever can be made in science, the fact that things exist must be accepted. And this requires no reasoning, for we cannot help believing it. But the apostle says: “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” Hebrews 11:3. We look at the heavens and the earth, and ask, How were they framed? And the answer is, God formed them out of nothing; he created the matter which composes them: “He spake and it was; he commanded and it stood fast.” By his own word he caused matter to exist where the instant before there was nothing. Who can understand this? Nobody. It is a miracle; but the acceptance of it by faith underlies all true science. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.2}

But the devotee of “science falsely so called,” attempts to account for the existence of the worlds in some other way. He says that all these things which we see were evolved from a single particle of matter. But when he has gone back to that atom, which, as he claims, has by repeated self-multiplication, produced the worlds, he is still confronted by the question, How did this atom come into existence? And he can never get back of that “How?” So after all his contempt for miracles, he bases his theories on a greater miracle than does the believer in the word of God. For he assumes that inanimate matter created itself out of nothing; while the Bible brings to view an intelligent Creator. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.3}

Suppose that our zealous friends should, by some miracle, succeed in explaining the miracles of the Bible; would the infidel then accept that book? Certainly not; for all reason for accepting it would be taken away. The Bible would then have been brought down to the level of man; it would be nothing more than any man could produce. We might go further, and say that if it were possible to explain the miracles of the Bible, there would be no God in whom to believe. The very existence of God implies the existence of miracles. God could not be God, and not work miracles. An infinite God *must* do things which are above the comprehension of a finite mind. They are not miracles to God; there can be no miracles to him,-for he simply does his own will. But the simplest acts of God must necessarily be above the comprehension of man. If it were not so, man would be equal to God. That the simplest acts of God are beyond human comprehension is demonstrated every day, in the growth of plants, the sunshine, the rain, and a thousand other things which we think we understand, because they are so common, but which no man can explain. We know that under certain conditions, certain results will follow; but why? God alone can answer. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.4}

And so it is a mistaken zeal which prompts one to try to explain the miracles of the Bible. No man can do it, but the very attempt to do so tends to lower God and the Bible in the estimation of unbelievers. It tends to make them think that God does not work in so very mysterious a way after all. Moreover, when believers attempt to explain miracles, the world accepts that attempt as an evidence that everything that God has done may be understood; and consequently when they read of something that absolutely defies comprehension, they reject it as false. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.5}

The reason why men are infidels is not because of the difficulties in the Bible, but because of the difficulties in their own hearts. When men lost the knowledge of God, it was not because they had nothing to reveal God to them, but “because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man.” Romans 1:21-23. The fault was all in themselves. It is an evil heart of unbelief that causes men to depart from God, and it is the same thing that keeps them from coming to him. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.6}

Says the apostle: “But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he *is*.” Hebrews 11:6. This proposition is self-evident. No one can come to God unless he first believes in the existence of God. And no one believes in the existence of God if he has conjured up in his mind some image to take the place of God, which is totally unlike God. And he who believes that God is, must believe in his power to work miracles. More than this, he must believe in the absolute necessity for the performance of miracles, because from the very nature of the case the infinite God must do things that are too wonderful for man to comprehend. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.7}

The fact that God is a wonder-working God is the great source of consolation to the Christian. To be sure the Christian rests in the promises of God, but what would those promises avail if infinite power were not behind them. When Christ commissioned his disciples to preach the gospel, he fortified them with the assurance, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” And thousands have read the promises of God, and have confidently rested in them, because of the words: “There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” Deuteronomy 33:26, 27. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.8}

The miracles of the Bible are not to be explained, but believed. Our belief in them is the measure of our belief in God. We believe that God exists, that he is the Creator of all things, and accepting this fact, we do not find it at all difficult to believe that he caused the shadow on the dial of Ahaz to turn backward; that he caused the sun to stand still in the heavens, so that one day was as long as two; that he divided the Red Sea, and the River Jordan; that he caused iron to swim, and made the dumb ass speak with human voice; that he preserved Jonah alive three days in the whale’s belly; or that he raised the dead. Why should he not do such things? “Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he would.” He made all things; why should we suppose that he has less power to control than he had in creating? No; it is the most natural thing in the world for our God to do wonderful things, because he is a wonderful God. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.9}

So we do not seek to explain any miracles; we cannot afford to waste time in so fruitless a task. And we know of no better way to convince infidels of the truth of the Bible than to put before them its plain declarations. The promises of God are not to those who understand them, but to those who believe them. Men may say that they can’t believe; it is not so; they can believe; they *must* believe or else be lost; for “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” W. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.10}

**“The Deep Things of God” The Signs of the Times, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

When a man has gazed into the starry heavens through a telescope, he has an idea of depth that he never had before. Let him, for instance, point his telescope toward some portion of the Milky Way, where to the naked eye only a faint haze is visible, and he will see not only countless multitudes of stars, but will be impressed with the fact that there is an infinite depth beyond, which the strongest telescope cannot fathom. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.11}

Suppose now that as the enthusiastic astronomer is dilating upon the wonders of the starry worlds, someone should say to him, “Oh! you see more in the heavens than is really there; those little shining specks are not so important as you think they are, but you have been gazing at them so intently for so long a time that everything is magnified to your vision.” Almost any intelligent person would tell such an one that it is impossible to overestimate the extent and wonders of the heavens; that the telescope magnifies nothing, but simply helps us to get an approximate idea of the actual size of the heavenly bodies; and that it is just as impossible for any man to comprehend the vastness of the universe as it is for him to comprehend God. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.12}

This train of thought was suggested by one who, after a conversation upon the law of God, said: “You have been studying the subject so long that, to you, everything is magnified. It is always the case that when one thinks on a certain subject a great deal, little things assume an importance which they do not actually possess.” Is this true? Can a person look into the perfect law of liberty so intently that some portions of it will assume undue proportions? Many who would agree with us in our statement concerning the heavens, will agree with our friend in his statement concerning the law; but it can be shown that the human mind can no more fathom the depths of the divine law, than it can compass the bounds of the universe. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.13}

If the law were of human origin it could be fathomed, for what one finite mind has evolved, another finite mind can comprehend. But who can know the Almighty to perfection? And the law of God is the righteous will of God. It is a transcript of his own character. This fact alone should convince anyone that there is no danger of overestimating any portion of it. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.14}

Things of human origin may often be comprehended at a glance, and then if one spends time poring over them, minor points assume undue importance. But the Scriptures, which are a commentary on the law, must be searched in order to be understood. One may imagine that his casual glance has enabled him to grasp all that is contained in a passage, and it may seem to him that there is little in it; but Paul says: “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Corinthians 2:14. And he says: “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” Verse 10. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.15}

These deep things of God are revealed only to those who have Christ, for in him “are *hid* all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Colossians 2:3. The psalmist David did not think there was any danger of thinking upon the law so much as to unduly exalt any portion of it, for he said: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.” Psalm 1:1, 2. And of himself he said “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.” {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 774.16}

“God is love;” all men who profess to know God, make much of this fact. His love is infinite, because he *is love*, and he is infinite. But no man can understand any more of the love of God than he does of the law of God, for the love of God runs parallel with his law. The love of God is just as extensive as his law, and no more so. Just consider: His law is a law of love, and we read that it was in love that he gave it to men. Deuteronomy 33:2, 3. He desires that all men should have life; but they cannot have life unless they are like him; for only those who are like God can dwell in his presence, and soon the glory of the Lord is to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Then those who are not like God will be destroyed. But no man can see God, so as to know what it is to be like him, and so God has given us his law,-the transcript of his character,-that we, by conforming to it, may be like him, and so have life. Thus the law was ordained to life. The angels who have never sinned, but who “do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word,” have life for that reason. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.1}

But as for men, “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” and “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Why did Christ die? He himself answers: “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. “Sin is the transgression of the law,” and “the wages of sin is death.” Hence we know that all men were doomed to death, because they had trampled upon the law of life, and God in his great love for them gave his only begotten Son, in order that they might, through faith in him, escape that awful fate. We say that this was infinite love; that in that one gift God gave all that Heaven had to bestow; and that the infinite power of God himself could do no more for guilty man than he has done. But would God take steps that were unnecessary? To give up his own Son was a sacrifice that a finite mind can never understand; would he have made that sacrifice if man could have been redeemed by any easier way? No, indeed; the love of God was no greater than was necessary to satisfy the righteous demands of his broken law. But that love was infinite; therefore the law itself is infinite. The love of God in Christ helps us to understand the law; the law of God, carefully studied, helps us to understand the love of God. Both work together. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.2}

The danger with men is that they will take too narrow and too shallow views of the law, and not that they will get too exalted ideas of its breadth and depth. Christ came to earth to “magnify the law, and make it honorable.” He did not make it larger than it was before, but exhibited it in his life, so that its hidden beauties might stand out prominent. He was the living embodiment of the law. He who studies the character of Christ, with a longing desire and an earnest purpose to emulate it, is studying the deep things of God,-the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,-that are hidden in him. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we learn that the greatest things in the law are those things which to the natural mind appear trivial, or which do not appear at all; and with the psalmist we cry to the Lord, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” W. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.3}

**“The Sure Word” The Signs of the Times, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

A few weeks ago we commented on the transfiguration scene, showing that it was a miniature representation of the coming of the Lord in glory, to raise the righteous dead, and to translate the living. That this was the intent of that wonderful scene is shown by the words of Christ, which immediately precede the record of that event: “Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.” Mark 9:1. And also by the words of Peter, who says with reference to that event: “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.” 2 Peter 1:16-18. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.4}

Even after that memorable day, the coming of the Lord must have been a more vivid reality to Peter, James, and John, than it had been before. Jesus said to them, “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory,” and now these three disciples could realize what that glory would be. They had been eye-witnesses of his majesty, and had beheld the glory of his coming. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.5}

Perhaps some may be inclined to say, “If I could have such evidence as that, I would have no doubt about the matter. If I could only see for myself, I should know that these things are so.” Well now read what Peter says immediately after his reference to the transfiguration:- {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.6}

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:19-21. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.7}

Here is something that is more sure than anything that man has seen: it is something that comes direct from “the Spirit of truth.” Men’s eyes may deceive them; but the word of prophecy does not depend upon any human faculty; it “came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” Men were simply the unresisting mouth-pieces of the Spirit of God; it spoke the words, and they had no voice in the matter. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.8}

An instance of how the prophecy came not by the will of man, is afforded by the case of Balaam. It is true that Balaam was not a “holy man of God;” but the fact that he intended to pronounce a curse makes it more apparent that the prophecy came not by the will of man. Balaam was tempted by the promise of a great reward to go and curse Israel, but God, in his great love for his people, “turned the curse into a blessing.” When Balak reproached Balaam for not cursing Israel, the latter replied, “If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; but what the Lord saith, that will I speak.” Numbers 24:13. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.9}

While Balaam was thus passive in the hands of the Lord, he uttered this prophecy: “I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.” Numbers 24:17-19. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.10}

Here we have one instance of the “sure word of prophecy” concerning the coming of the Lord. Considering the circumstances under which it was uttered, it is a notable instance. It shows most fully that prophecy is something that has in it nothing of the human, but is wholly divine. No human frailty enters into it, but it comes direct from the Holy Spirit. Thus it is “more sure” than human eyesight. For this reason it is that it was said: “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.11}

Still more ancient than the prophecy given through Balaam is the one uttered by Enoch. Jude speaks of the destruction of the wicked, and says (verses 14, 15): “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.12}

The well-known prophecy uttered by Job is perhaps more ancient than that spoken by Balaam. After expressing a wish that his words might be graven in the enduring rock, he said: “For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.” Job 19:25-27. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.13}

This prophecy brings to view the Christian’s hope, namely, the resurrection of the dead at the coming of the Lord, showing that from the earliest times this was the hope of God’s people. It was “the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers.” Acts 26:6. But more explicit than any yet quoted, as showing “the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,” is the following by “the sweet psalmist of Israel,” who could say, “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” 2 Samuel 23:2. The word of the Lord, which was in his tongue, said:- {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.14}

“The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” Psalm 50:1-5. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.15}

Again the Lord spoke by him to the same intent: “Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice Before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth; he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.” Psalm 96:11-13. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.16}

With this we must close for this week. Next week we shall quote further from the “sure word of prophecy” concerning the coming of the Lord, and shall then give further evidence that the word of prophecy is sure. W. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 775.17}

**“‘A Desert Place’” The Signs of the Times, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Many persons, anxious to find some excuse for sprinkling instead of baptism, have argued that it was impossible that Philip could have found enough water to immerse the eunuch, because the record says that the way which they went “is desert.” Such persons must have a difficulty with the narrative which forms the basis of the present lesson; for the record says that Jesus departed “into a desert place apart,” and that “when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send a multitude away, that they may go into the villages and by themselves victuals;” and yet it says that “he commanded the multitude to sit down *on the grass*,” before he fed them. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 770.1}

The answer to the objection concerning the eunuch’s baptism is, as we see in the latter instance, that “a desert place” does not necessarily mean a place where there is no water and no vegetation. It applies to any uninhabited, solitary place. It may be a sandy, barren waste, or it may be a place where there is vegetation. Even in the great Sahara Desert, which is to most minds a synonym for everything barren, there are cases where there are springs of water, and where vegetation flourishes. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 770.2}

Even supposing that “the way that goeth down from Jerusalem to Gaza,” which Philip and the eunuch traveled, was a sandy desert like the Sahara, we must allow that the two travelers came across a fertile place where there was water enough for immersion, for that the “baptism” means immerse, and that only, is admitted by the best scholars, even though they practice sprinkling instead. When God commands that a certain thing shall be done, and especially when his word says that it was done, it is hardly worth while for men to argue that it cannot be done. W. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 770.3}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

The report of the Annual Convention of the National W. C. T. U. say of the one who made the opening prayer:- {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.1}

“She opened with a prayer that carried all hearts up to God, ‘Our Mother God as well as our Father.’” {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.2}

This is dose enough for our readers at one time, so we forbear giving any more till another time. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.3}

A friend and renewing his subscription refers to Revelation 16:13, 14, and also Revelation 17:13, 14, and asks if it may not be that modern Spiritualism is warring with the word of God. Of course it may be. Modern Spiritualism does nothing else. If it was devised by the great enemy of truth, and its sole object is to lead men away from the truth of the Bible. Our friends need not be in doubt on that point. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.4}

Let it not be forgotten, to the credit of the ladies of the National Woman’s Christian temperance Union, recently assembled in annual convention in Nashville, Tenn., that they passed a resolution deprecating the slaughter of birds in order to decorate ladies’ bonnets. Of course this pledges each member of the Union to abstain from the use of such decorations, and we may hope erelong to see the savage custom a thing of the past among civilized people. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.5}

There is no question that is growing faster in the United States to-day than is the Sunday question. It is coming nearer and nearer to the point where it will be an essential factor in the political field. And the *Christian Nation* announces the intention of it all, thus:- {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.6}

“Let those who will remember the Sabbath to keep it holy from motives of love and obedience; the remnant must be made to do so through fear of law. We have no option.”-*Christian Nation, September 28, 1887.* {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.7}

The *Christian Cynosure* reports the following church item:- {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.8}

Rev. H. C. Heyser, pastor of a German Evangelical Church, has resigned. He says: “The cause of the disagreement is due to the fact that we have socialists and anarchists among the church members. They want a religion without a Christ and a world without a God. That is a kind of theology of which I have no understanding, and not being able to preach it resigned. The most influential members in the congregation, it appears, are either saloon keepers or proprietors of shooting galleries, and the church is unable to discipline them.” {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.9}

It would seem that a church that had not the power to discipline such members as that, had better cease to be called a church, because it is in fact just anything at all *but* a church. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.10}

The National Reformers indignantly deny the charge that they are laboring for a union of Church and State, but insist that what they want is a union of Religion and State. The Rev. Josiah Strong, D. D., General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, and author of the well-known book, “Our Country,” has expressed himself to the same effect. He, with the National Reformers, wants not Church and State, but Religion and State. Says Dr. Strong, “I distinguish, as some apparently do not, between *Church* and *Religion*.” {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.11}

Now we think we know enough about mathematics to work out so simple a problem as is here presented. The three terms are these, the State, the Church, and Religion. They say that they designed to keep Church and State forever separate and distinct, but that Religion must be closely united. The result of our calculation is that if they succeed in their design they will necessarily have to divorce the Church and Religion. If this solution is not correct, we should be glad if someone would point out the defect in our calculation. We verily believe that when the National Reformers, and their many friends who do not go by that name, shall have accomplished their purpose, no one of acute perception will have any difficulty in distinguishing between Church and Religion. There may be a *form* of Religion but the power will have fled forever. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.12}

The following from a correspondent of the *Congregationalist*, is an example of the natural working of the theory of a probation after death:- {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.13}

“One of our clergymen, not long ago, wrote a paper in defense of the Andover theology. The paper was printed and a copy sent to me. Not far from this time I met the son of this clergyman, and as we were conversing on religious matters, he lightly said: ‘Well, if there’s going to be another chance in the next world, I guess I won’t trouble myself about religion now.’” {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.14}

Let it be remembered that this “Andover theology” is but another phase of the well-known doctrine of the Age-to-come, and that all Age-to-come teaching tends to directly lull men into security. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.15}

**“Good Words for Rome” The Signs of the Times, 13, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Quite a sensation was made in one of the meetings of the Christian Conference just held in Washington, D.C., by a reference to the Catholic Church. Mr. Simcon E. Baldwin, of New Haven, Conn., asked what church had best observed and guarded the teachings of the Bible regarding the family and divorce, and replied that no church represented in that conference, but only “the older Christian church with its head at Rome.” He said that he was sorry that in this conference he had listened to unkind words respecting the sole Christian church. At this same member cried out, “I object to that; I don’t believe it is a Christian church at all.” After the buzz of excitement that followed this had subsided, Mr. Baldwin rejoined:- {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.16}

“That is exactly the sentiment that I have heard uttered from this platform, and against which I protest. In my work with Mr. Dike in the divorce-reform league, I have found no truer friend than the Roman Catholic Church. One of the great friends to the cause of social advancement is the Roman Catholic Church. It guards the home, it guards the family, it guards the child. We ought to make friends with the Roman Catholic Church, and unless we do it, we reject one of the great factors in the cause of the advancement of Christ.” {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.17}

When Mr. Baldwin sat down, Mr. Dodge the President of the Evangelical Alliance, under whose auspices the conference was held, said he was sorry that Mr. Baldwin had so entirely mistaken the sentiment of the Alliance on this question. He said that he knew of no one who had not profound respect for the piety of Roman Catholics, and for the good done by them. The only word that had been uttered was that they did not believe in allegiance to a foreign power, a power that was opposed to our free institutions, especially our public schools, but that for the Catholic Church as a Christian church they had nothing but love and sympathy. Said he: “We will always welcome their assistance, and we will defend with our hearts’ blood rights for them that we claim for ourselves.” The remarks of Mr. Dodge were interrupted by prolonged applause, and the conference broke out in applause at their close. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.18}

Thus we see how the barriers between Catholicism and Protestantism are being taken away, and it is not the Catholic Church that is making the advances. How long will it be before professed Protestants will begin to condemn Luther? The Catholic Church has not changed a particle; and if it is now one of the great factors in the advancement of the cause of Christ and social reforms, it must have been so in Luther’s day; and if so, he made a great mistake. The truth is, the great body of professed Protestants have become so intoxicated with the wine of Rome-the desire for “catholicity” and church supremacy-that they are even now scarcely able to distinguish between Christ and antichrist. {SITI December 22, 1887, p. 784.19}

**“The Decline of Civilization” The Signs of the Times, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

The San Francisco *Chronicle* has the following editorial comment on the way that Sullivan, America’s champion human bull-dog, has been received by royalty in England. The *Chronicle’s* comparison is a just one; but it seems to forget that Sullivan went to England with the official indorsement of the most cultured city in the United States, and that the bloody sports of the arena are fully as popular in this country as in England. Rome’s decline began with the introduction of gladiatorial shows; why are we not justified in concluding that England and America are going the same way? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 785.1}

A London dispatch says, “The Prince of Wales, who was very much prepossessed by the American’s independent, sent his equerry to a well-known jeweler’s in Bond Street and ordered a handsome gold watch to be made, bearing the inscription, ‘To John L. Sullivan, Boston, U.S.A., with best wishes of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales.” {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 785.2}

Does this carry the reader back at once to the pages of Suetonius and Gibbon, and to the times when the brawny gladiators were the pets and boon companions of the desolute masters and rulers of the Roman Empire? Can we not, in our imagination, se Domitian, given over to those vices which evoked the merciless satire of Juvenal, not the least of which was the emperor’s inordinate fondness for the sports of the arena and the delight at the sight of human blood? Does not this gift from the heir of the British throne to John L. Sullivan, with the best wishes of the giver, unavoidably recall the decadence of the Roman Empire, and conjure up the picture of the times when the sect called Christians were butchered to make a Roman holiday, and when cruelty, luxury, and licentiousness reigned supreme in that city which had been the mistress of the world? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 785.3}

And who is the man whom the future king of England so delights to honor, and to whom he extends a token of his admiration and his best wishes? Simply a man who enjoys the notoriety of being the most powerful brute that walks erect; a creature who can strike a harder blow with his fist than any other living animal except the gorilla and the grizzly; a human being who, so far as the record shows, has never done a kindly or manly or generous act in his whole life, who has never used his vast strength for the protection of the weak and feeble, who has never done his country or his kind one moment’s service; but who, on the contrary, has been a rowdy, a bully, a swashbuckler, a terror to women and inoffensive men, a drunkard, and a brawler, and altogether a disreputable and wholly useless member of society. This is the man whom Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, heir apparent to the kingly and imperial throne of Great Britain, honors with his presence, and favors with his best wishes. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 785.4}

**“The Sure Word” The Signs of the Times, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

Last week we called attention to Peter’s statement that the word of prophecy is more sure than the testimony of any eye-witness, and quoted a few prophecies that speak of “the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” We wish now to quote a few more of the many prophecies concerning this same thing, that the reader may see how important a place it occupies. And we offer no apology for making copious extracts from the sure word. Certainly nothing that man can write can equal in interest and importance the words of inspiration. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.1}

Turning to the book of the prophet Isaiah, we read as follows, beginning with the tenth verse of the second chapter:- {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.2}

“Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.... And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. In the day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefs of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake the terrible the earth.” {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.3}

This language certainly gives us a vivid idea of the “*power* and coming” of the Lord. But the holy man of God, whose lips were touched by a coal from God’s own altar, was made the mouth-piece of a still more vivid description of the power that shall attend the coming of the Lord. Again the Holy Spirit moved him to say:- {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.4}

“Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man’s heart shall melt; and they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.” Isaiah 13:6-13. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.5}

Once more the Lord speaks through his servant:- {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.6}

“Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.” Isaiah 24:1-6. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.7}

Who these few men are that are left from the general destruction that overwhelms those who have transgressed the laws, is told through the same prophet in these words:- {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.8}

“The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.” Isaiah 33:14-17. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.9}

That these righteous ones are the “few men” who are left after the day of the Lord has laid the land desolate, and destroyed the sinners out of it, is evident from our Saviour’s words, recorded in Matthew 7:13, 14: “Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.10}

Jeremiah was another “holy man of God,” whom the Holy Ghost moved to speak. Like John the Baptist, he was chosen even before his birth to be a prophet unto the nations. When the Lord announced this fact to him (Jeremiah 1:4, 5), he said: “Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.” Verses 6, 7. And the prophet continues: “Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.” Verse 9. What better credentials could any man have than this? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.11}

From lips burning with the touch of the Almighty hand, Jeremiah poured forth the words “which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” And here is a portion of his word concerning “the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:”- {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.12}

“Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled; suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment. How long shall I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet? For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end.” Jeremiah 4:20-27. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.13}

We next turn to “the burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see,” and read the following word concerning the power of the Lord’s coming:- {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.14}

“God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand; and there was the hiding of his power.” Habakkuk 3:3, 4. Compare with these words 2 Thessalonians 2:8: “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” It is the glory of the Lord,-that glory which he received from the Father in the holy mount, and which he had with him before the world was,-that will destroy the winners out of the earth when he comes. But we turn again to the words spoken through Habakkuk:- {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.15}

“Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth; he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; his ways are everlasting.... The mountains saw thee, and they trembled; the overflowing of the water passed by; the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck.” Habakkuk 3:5-13. W. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.16}

**“Establishment of the Sabbath” The Signs of the Times, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” Exodus 20:8-11. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.17}

If there were no other facts given concerning the Sabbath than those contained in the above commandment, we would still have everything that is needed to guide us to its proper observance. Indeed, since it is the law on the subject, we should expect as much, even without reading it, for a law concerning anything must contain within itself all the affirmation necessary to enable one to obey it understandingly. This is the case with the other precepts of the decalogue. They are explicit, allowing no chance for differences of opinion. The only difference between the fourth commandment and the rest is that it is more full and explicit than any of them. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.18}

But the wise man has truly said, “God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions;” and for no purpose have “inventions” been more persistently sought out than for the purpose of the evading the plain import of this fourth commandment. Many are not satisfied with the simple reading of the law, vainly thinking that somewhere in the record of God’s dealings with men, they will find that which will warrant them in disregarding his spoken word. It therefore is necessary to consider everything that has a bearing on the subject. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.19}

It is evident that a law can never mean anything more or less than it did when first pronounced. If the conditions on which the law is based change, or the will of the law-giver changes concerning these conditions, then the law itself may be changed; but such change must be clearly indicated. The terms of the law must be changed, or another law enacted with the express declaration that it is to supersede the first. Until this is done, the original law remains in full force, even though the will of the law-making power should change; for how can the people know the will of the power having authority, unless that will is plainly expressed? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.20}

Again, if any change in a law is made, the new law must not only be expressed in as clear language as the old, but it must be as widely circulated. All who are subject to the law and are expected to keep it, must be informed of the change, or else they cannot keep it. To punish a person for the violation of a law with which he had been allowed to become familiar, would be an act of injustice. God does not so deal with his creatures. In every instance when the execution of his judgments is recorded, we are plainly informed as to the command which was violated; and a penalty is never threatened in the Bible without an explicit statement being made of what course of action will make one liable to that penalty. With the statements, we will proceed to dissect, as it were, the Sabbath law, to see if it really means what it appears to; and we will also see if it has in any way been modified, or been superseded by another law. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 790.21}

It is evident from the reading of the fourth commandment that the Sabbath did not originate at Sinai. For we are referred to the creation of the earth, and told that the conclusion of that work God “blessed” and “hallowed” the Sabbath day. It must, therefore, have been in existence at that time; a thing that has no existence cannot be blessed, neither can it be hallowed. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 791.1}

This will be still more evident when we consider the meaning of the word “hallow.” Webster defines it thus: “To make holy; to set apart for holy or religious use; to consecrate.” The word in the original is defined similarly. It is the same word that is rendered “sanctified” in Genesis 2:3, and “appoint” in Joshua 20:7. The fourth commandment, then, tells us plainly that God commanded the Sabbath to be kept holy in the beginning. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 791.2}

Turning to the first chapter of Genesis we read the record of the first six days of time, in which the heavens and the earth, and all that they contain, were created, the work of each day being specified. At the close of the sixth day God looked for the whole of his creation “and behold, it was a very good.” He was satisfied with his work, because it was perfect. The record continues:- {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 791.3}

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” Genesis 2:1-3. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 791.4}

We have here the record of the first Sabbath commandment. That in Exodus 20:8-11 is the same in every respect, being simply a renewal of the commandment as given at creation. In the institution of the Sabbath there was a three-fold act on the part of God. First, he rested on the seventh day. This made that day Sabbath, for Sabbath means rest. Because the Lord rested, it is called the Sabbath, or rest, of the Lord. But this act did not place man under any obligation to rest on that day. If the record stopped here, we would have no interest in it except as a matter of history. Second, God pronounced a blessing upon the day. It was thus exalted above other days in that it was a Sabbath, and blessed; still these two acts were not sufficient to make its observance obligatory on man. Third, he sanctified the day, that is, set it apart for holy for religious use; he appointed that it should be regarded holy. This was the crowning act which placed man under obligation to keep it. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 791.5}

Let it be remembered that it required these three acts to institute the Sabbath in the beginning. It certainly can take nothing less to institute a new Sabbath, should there be such a thing; and therefore whenever we find men claiming that some other day is entitled to recognition as the true Sabbath, we have only to apply these tests: Did God ever rest upon it? Did he ever pronounce a blessing upon it? Did he ever pronounce it holy, and set it apart for sacred observance? If these three questions in regard to any other day cannot be truthfully answered by a simple affirmation, then that day does not approach in honor and sacredness to the original Sabbath of the Lord. Man may rest upon any other day, and that they will thus become his rest, or sabbath; but men cannot pronounce a blessing upon the day, thus elevating it above other days, neither can he sanctify the day; he cannot make it holy, and he has no right to command anybody else to rest upon it. And since there is no record that God ever did these three things for any other day than the seventh, that day stands alone, distinguished above all other days as being the Sabbath of the Lord. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 791.6}

We will go even further, and say that it is an absolute impossibility that the Sabbath should be changed from the original seventh day to any other day. God himself could not do this. In so saying, we do not place any limit upon the power of God, save this, which inspiration itself authorizes, that “he cannot deny himself.” The institution of the Sabbath rests upon facts which God himself established. A “fact” is simply something that has been done; and a thing that has been done can never be effaced, so that it will cease to be true that it has been done. The Sabbath rests upon those three facts: (1) In six days God created the heavens and the earth, and rested upon the seventh day; (2) he blessed the seventh day and (3) sanctified, or set it apart as a sacred day for man’s observance. And these last two acts he did “because that in it *he had rested* from all his works which God created and made.” {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 791.7}

Now if it can ever be true that the world was not created in six days, and that God did not rest upon the seventh day, and afterwards bless and sanctify it; in other words, if the word of God can be recalled, so that it shall be as though it had never been spoken; and if the wheels of time can be made to roll backward six thousand years and more, and their tracks be obliterated; and if matters can be so effectually annihilated that it will be a truth that it never existed, then, and not till then, can the seventh day cease to be the Sabbath of the Lord. But it needs no argument to show that this can never be; God cannot deny what he has once said and done; much less can he make it true that he never did the things which he has done. “He cannot deny himself,” and so even Omnipotence cannot change the Sabbath of the Lord from the seventh day of the week. W. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 791.8}

**“Job and His Friends” The Signs of the Times, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

Human nature in the days of Job was just the same as it is now. We have proof of it in the way that Job was treated by his friends. He himself tells how he was regarded in the days when he was “the greatest of all the men of the East,” when the rock poured him out rivers of oil. He says: “The young men saw me, and hid themselves; and the aged a rose, and stood up. The princes refrained talking, and laid their hands on their mouth. The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaves to the roof of their mouth.” Still further he shows how ready men were to fawn over him, and how glad to be noticed by him: “Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel. After my words they spake not again; and my speech dropped upon them. And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain. If I laughed on them, they believed it not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down.” {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 793.1}

That was when he was wealthy; but now that he had lost everything, and was afflicted, his friends had changed. He says: “But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.” The friends of his prosperity had gone, and the vilest of men heaped contempt upon him. More than this, he says, “My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.” But this state of things did not always last, for “the Lord turned the captivity of Job;” “also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.” Now read what happened when this turn had taken place in Job’s fortunes:- {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 793.2}

“Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house; and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him; every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.” {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 793.3}

Plenty of friends now. “All they that had been of his acquaintances *before*” came to see him, “and did eat bread in his house.” They had no doubt eaten bread in his house before; they knew how hospitable he was, and what a good table he always set, and so they were wonderfully rejoiced to learn of the restoration of his fortune. “And they bemoaned him.” Yes, they were very ready to bemoan him then; but if they had come when Job was suffering the greatest poverty and affliction, their comfort would no doubt have been more acceptable. Doubtless they have a plausible excuse for not coming to his aid when he was in distress; they were “very sorry that circumstances made it impossible for them to come,” etc., but they would now show that their affection for him had not waned in the least, by everyone giving him a piece of money, when he had no earthly need of it. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 793.4}

The story of Job and his friends is true to life. Job must have known more of human nature after his affliction then he did before. The friends of his prosperity do not commend themselves to us anymore than do those of his adversity. But we do not read that Job became sour and cynical over this revelation of human fickleness. He didn’t jump at the conclusion that there was ‘not an honest man in the world.” Many people say that or its equivalent; yet there never was a man who said it, who believed it. Every man who said so mentally accepted himself. But while Job learned much of human nature he had also learned much of the divine nature, and he knew there were many in whom the image of God was not wholly obliterated. So we can believe that since Job had seen that “the Lord is very painful and of tender mercy,” he had learned to have a charity for the failings of others. The man who allows affliction to make him sour and morose, fails to learn a great lesson which affliction is designed to teach. If the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, tribulation works only patience. W. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 793.5}

**“Creation” The Signs of the Times, 13, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

**THE COMMENTARY.**

**LESSON 1.—SABBATH, JANUARY 7**

1. What did God do in the beginning? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.1}

“In the beginning God created the heaven and earth.” Genesis 1:1. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.2}

2. By what means was this accomplished? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.3}

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.” “For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.” Psalm 33:6, 9. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.4}

3. Are we to understand from these words that the matter of the earth was not in existence before he spake? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.5}

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” Hebrews 11:3. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.6}

4. Who was the active agent in creation? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.7}

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.” Hebrews 1:1, 2. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.8}

5. Is there anything that the Son did not make? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.9}

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” Colossians 1:16, 17. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.10}

6. Since it was by the Son that the Father created all things, what is his rightful title? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.11}

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word God.” “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.” John 1:1, 3. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.12}

7. How has the Father addressed the Son? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.13}

“But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands friends.” Hebrews 1:8, 10. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.14}

8. Then how should he be regarded by all creatures? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.15}

“And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.” Hebrews 1:6. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.16}

9. In what condition was the earth when it was first spoken into existence? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.17}

“And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:2. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.18}

10. After the creation of the substances of the earth, what was the first thing done? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.19}

“And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.” Verse 3. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.20}

11. What next? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.21}

“And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.” Verse 4. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.22}

12. What did God call the light and the darkness? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.23}

“And God called a light day, and the darkness he called night. And the evening and morning were the first day.” Verse 5. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.24}

13. What do a period of darkness and a period of light together constitute? See verse 5. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.25}

14. Which always comes first in the formation of a day? *The darkness*. Can you explain why? See notes. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.26}

15. What was done on the second day? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.27}

“And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.” Genesis 1:6-8. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.28}

16. How is this day’s work referred to by Job? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.29}

“He bindeth up the waters in his thick cloud; and the cloud is not granted under them.” Job 26:8. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.30}

17. What was done on the third day? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.31}

“And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. And God called the dry land earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he seas; and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day.” Genesis 1:9-13. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.32}

18. What was made upon the fourth day? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.33}

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.” Verse 14. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.34}

19. What were these lights to govern? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.35}

“And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also.” Verse 16. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.36}

20. Then what kind of days were these days of creation? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.37}

21. Does the sun *make* the day, or simply rule the day? {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.38}

22. Tell what makes the day, and how there could be days before the sun was. {SITI December 29, 1887, p. 794.39}