**“The Fruit of the Spirit” The Signs of the Times, 14, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

If we compare the fruit of the Spirit with the result obtained by following the teachings of the Bible, we shall find that they are identical. Paul says that all Scripture is “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Timothy 3:16, 17. So if a man will profit by the reproofs and instruction found in the word of God, he will be perfect, lacking in no good thing. But a man cannot be more than perfect, and anything different from perfection is imperfection. The fact that any belief or practice is not indorsed or sanctioned by the Bible, is sufficient to condemn it. If it is not found in the Bible, it is not a part of the outfit necessary to make a man perfect. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 740.1}

In Galatians 5:22, 23 we read, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” These fruits of the Spirit are the results which come from following the guidance of the Spirit. We will examine them in detail, and see if they differ in any particular from the word of God. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 740.2}

The first thing mentioned is love. Very many persons entirely mistake the Bible meaning of love. With many it consists in a sort of good feeling, an indefinable condition, the principal feature of which is that the person feels happy and extremely well satisfied with himself. But the kind of love that the Bible brings to view does not depend solely on the emotions, but is very practical. John says, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3. Again, “And this is love, that we walk after His commandments.” The keeping of the commandments is the test of love. Paul says, “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” Who ever heard of a law being fulfilled by its violation? Some persons think that they have so much love to God that he will accept it as a substitute for keeping the law; but we here learn that love *is* the keeping of the commandments. How a person can love God, and refuse to keep all his commandments, is a mystery that no one has ever been able to explain. Those who make such a profession lay themselves liable to the charge in 1 John 2:4. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 740.3}

We see, then, that the result of following the Holy Spirit is to keep the commandments. But this is the whole duty of man. Ecclesiastes 12:13. And we shall find that while love is the keeping of the commandments, all the other things mentioned by Paul in Galatians 5:22, 23, as the fruit of the Spirit, are the natural results of keeping the commandments. Joy and peace are mentioned next; and they attend the keeping of the law. The psalmist says, “Great peace have they which love thy law.” Psalm 119:165. Again we read, “O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” Isaiah 48:18. Here, too, the Spirit and the word agree. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 740.4}

Long-suffering and gentleness are given as part of the fruit of the Spirit. Paul says, in 1 Corinthians 13:4, that charity (love), which we have seen is simply the keeping of the law, “suffereth long, and is kind.” He also says that it “vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up;” and as we have seen, meekness is a part of the fruit of the Spirit. Goodness is also part of the fruit of the Spirit; and Paul tells us that love “rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 740.5}

Again we read that “where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.” 2 Corinthians 3:17. But James says that the law of God is a “law of liberty.” James 1:25; 2:12. And David says that those are at liberty who keep the law. Psalm 119:45. Here, again, we see perfect harmony. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 740.6}

Again Paul says, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Romans 8:14. John tells us that those whom God in his great love calls his sons, and who have a hope to see him as he is, purify themselves. 1 John 3:1-3. And Peter completes the chain of testimony by saying, “Seeing ye have purified our souls in *obeying the truth*,” and he adds that this purifying is done “through the Spirit.” 1 Peter 1:22. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 740.7}

But it is not necessary to multiply proofs. That there can be no inharmony between God’s word and his Spirit is so self-evident that no one who professes to be a Christian should presume to question it. Indeed, the Bible is the work of the Holy Spirit itself. We read, “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 1:21. May the Lord help us humbly to follow the leadings of the Spirit, that we may be guided “into all truth” (John 17:17), and finally share the promise of our Father to “see him as he is.” W. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 740.8}

**“The Goodness of God” The Signs of the Times, 14, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

The expression, “God is good,” is one that is in very common use among Christians, yet we are morally certain that very few receive the benefit from it that they might. To very many the expression brings more dread than trust, and the reason is that they have an erroneous, or at least a limited, idea of what is meant by the term “good.” They connect goodness with sternness or inflexible justice, having an incorrect idea even of justice. Many people look upon a good man as one who is so far above the common lot of people that he cannot sympathize with them. They feel as though he could not make any allowance for their infirmities. As a matter of fact, the opposite of this is the case. But with this false idea of goodness, it is no wonder that men are repelled from God. Be it known, however, that God does not repel any. Those who feel that they cannot approach God, have only themselves to blame, for the Bible declares that the goodness of God leads to repentance. Romans 2:4. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.1}

From this passage it is evident that the term “goodness” includes more than simple stern virtues. Says Paul, in the passage just referred to: “Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” To be *good* is to be kind and loving as well as virtuous. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.2}

This quality of goodness is brought out by the apostle in Romans 5:7: “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.” Some might think this is a contradiction, but it is not. The words “righteous” and “good” are entirely different. The idea is that no matter how upright a man may be, no matter how honest, one would scarcely die for him; but some might be found who would be willing to die for a benevolent man, one whose whole life has been devoted to acts of kindness to others. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.3}

In the above paragraph we came near using the term “law-abiding” to express the character of the righteous man, whose virtues did not draw people to him in tender love. It would not have been really wrong to do so, for righteousness is right-doing, conformity to the law. And yet the righteousness which is not thoroughly permeated with kindness and tender love, is a righteousness that springs more from compliance with the letter of the law than with the spirit of it; for “love is the fulfilling of the law.” Romans 13:10. The law of God is a law of love, for God is love. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.4}

In the thirteenth of 1 Corinthians the apostle Paul gives some of the qualities of love, which is nothing but the keeping of the commandments of God. “Charity love suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.” All that God requires of us is conformity to his own character, yet we are exhorted to be “kind one to another, tender-hearted.” In so doing we approach most nearly to the character of God, for he is the pattern of tenderness that is set before us. We are to forgive one another even as God hath for Christ’s sake forgiven us. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.5}

“God is love.” This does not mean that God has love for his creatures, but that he is love itself. Now since God is love, and his law is simply a transcript of his character, it follows that goodness is tenderness; and when people feel to shrink from God because of his incomparable goodness, it shows that they are yet strangers to true goodness. Take all the knowledge you have either by experience of imagination, of kindness, gentleness, tenderness, and love, and multiply that by infinity, and you have the goodness of God which leads to repentance. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.6}

Perhaps the words of the apostle in 2 Corinthians, 5:19 may make the matter plainer to some: “To wit, that *God was in Christ*, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” The whole world unites in praising the gentleness of Christ. He “went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.” Acts 10:38. The character of God is a most lovable one. How he sympathized with the suffering and the sinful! At the grave of Lazarus he wept; when he saw the multitude scattered as sheep having no shepherd, he was moved with compassion; when the loathsome leper came to him, he shrank not away, but touched him, imparting at once with that touch of sympathy and love both healing and forgiveness; and how wonderful is the tender compassion that is manifested in his dealing with the woman taken in adultery. Most of all does his love shine out at the close of his earthly career, when for those who had reviled him, mocked him, spit upon him, scourged him, mangled his head with thorns, and brutally crucified him, he prayed, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!” Who that rightly considers his life and death can fail to be drawn towards him? And yet, “God was in Christ.” Christ was here simply as a representative of the Father; and so perfect was the resemblance that he could say, when asked to show the Father: “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?” John 14:9. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.7}

The goodness of Christ is the goodness of the Father. Who can help feeling that the call, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,” is like the reaching out of the mother’s arms for the tired child to nestle in her bosom? And yet when Christ uttered those words it was the voice of the Father speaking through him. So we see that the goodness of God, which leads to repentance, is gentleness; for tenderness, and gentleness alone can win, and God *draws* sinners to him. And this gentle goodness not only leads to repentance, but clothes the soul with strength, as David sings in the following wonderful verses:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.8}

“He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms. Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation; and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great.” Psalm 18:34, 35. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.9}

How much sorrow and unrest we get to ourselves from our failure to rightly understand the goodness of God! “Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.10}

*“For the love of God is broader  
Than the measure of man’s mind;  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.11}*

*“If our love were but more simple,  
We should take him at his word;  
And our lives would be all sunshine,  
In the sweetness of our Lord.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.12}*

**“A Proverb Disputed” The Signs of the Times, 14, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

There is no doubt a wholesome fact covered by the homely old adage that “a lie will travel a league while truth is putting on its boots.” But the traveling ability of the lie doesn’t hold out. It starts too lively and travels too fast for its bottom. The adage very properly speaks only of a single league. Truth always understands its business better. It knows too much to start in a hurry. It takes time to get ready. It travels in “league boots,” a league at a step, and of course soon overtakes the lie, to find that its lively start and its rapid travel early in the race have seriously impaired its wind. Generally it knocks that lie upon the head at once, and leaves it a shame and a stench by the wayside. When it doesn’t, it brands its forehead in big letters, and leaves it to stagger out an unhonored existence. The moral of this is that we may safely truth Truth to take care of itself after it is fairly put in the field. It will certainly outwear all its antagonists, however lively and witty they may have been at first, and however discouragingly slow it may have appeared in getting on its boots and in starting. Scurrility, and what too often passes for wit, leave only transient impressions.-*Evangelist*. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.13}

The truth expressed in the above paragraph is too often lost sight of. We do not always see the truth vindicated at once; but while error may enjoy a brief triumph, the lovers of truth may well possess their souls in patience, knowing that, {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.14}

*“Truth crushed to earth will rise again;  
The eternal years of God are hers.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.15}*

**“The Papacy. (Concluded.)” The Signs of the Times, 14, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

When the last of these Arian powers was overthrown (A.D. 538), there was nothing to hinder the bishop of Rome from occupying the proud position for which he had so long been striving. Speaking of the way in which the Roman bishop gradually usurped power over other churches, D’Aubigne says:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.16}

“To silence the cries of the churches, Rome found new allies. Princes, who in those troublesome times often saw their thrones tottering, offered their adherence to the church, in exchange for her support. They yielded to her spiritual authority, on condition of her paying them with secular dominion. They left her to deal at will with the *souls* of men, provided only she would deliver them from their enemies. The power of the hierarchy in the ascending scale, and of the imperial power which was declining, leaned thus one toward the other-and so accelerated their twofold destiny. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.17}

“Rome could not lose by this. An edict of Theodosius II. and of Valentinian III. proclaimed the bishop of Rome ‘ruler of the whole church.’ Justinian issued a similar decree. These decrees did not contain all that the Popes pretended to see in them. But in those times of ignorance it was easy for them to gain reception for that interpretation which was most favorable to themselves-*History of the Reformation, book 1, chap. 1, paragraph 29, 30*. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.18}

To show plainly the object of these wars against the Arian powers, and what was gained by them, we make two brief quotations from Gibbon. After having rehearsed the defeat of the Vandals and the capture of Carthage by the Romans, the historian speaks as follows concerning Justinian:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.19}

“He received the messengers of victory at the time when he was preparing to publish the pandects of the Roman law; and the devout or jealous emperor celebrated the divine goodness, and confessed, in silence, the merit of his successful general. Impatient to abolish the temporal and spiritual tyranny of the Vandals, he proceeded, without delay, to the full establishment of the Catholic Church. Her jurisdiction, wealth, and immunities, perhaps the most essential part of Episcopal religion, were restored and amplified with a liberal hand; the Arian worship was suppressed, the Donatist meetings were proscribed; and the synod of Carthage, by the voice of two hundred and seventeen bishops, applauded the just measure of pious retaliation.”-*Decline and Fall, chap. 41, paragraph 11*. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.20}

The victory of Belisarius over the Ostrogoths (A.D. 538) is thus described:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.21}

“The Goths consented to retreat in the presence of a victorious enemy; to delay till the next spring the operations of offensive war; to summon their scattered forces; to relinquish their distant possessions, and to trust even Rome itself to the faith of its inhabitants. Leuderis, an aged warrior, was left in the capital with four thousand soldiers; a feeble garrison, which might have seconded the zeal, though it was incapable of opposing the wishes of the Romans. But a momentary enthusiasm of religion and patriotism was kindled in their minds. They furiously exclaimed that the apostolic throne should no longer be profaned by the triumph or toleration of Arianism; that the tombs of the Cæsars should no longer be trampled by the savages of the North; and, without reflecting that Italy must sink into a province of Constantinople, they fondly hailed the restoration of a Roman emperor as a new era of freedom and prosperity. The deputies of the Pope and clergy, of the Senate and people, invited the lieutenant of Justinian to accept their voluntary allegiance, and to enter the city, whose gates would be thrown open for his reception.... The first days, which coincided with the old Saturnalia, were devoted to mutual congratulation and the public joy, and the Catholics prepared to celebrate, without a rival, the approaching festival of the nativity of Christ.”-*Id., paragraphs 22, 23*. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 742.22}

These quotations show most conclusively that in A.D. 538 the bishop of Rome did become literally “the Pope,” *i.e.*, the father, or head and ruler, of the churches. The last opposing horn had then been plucked up, and the Papacy was free to enter upon that career of ecclesiastical tyranny for which it had long been preparing; and the “mystery of iniquity” which had been working so long was given full liberty. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.1}

But since the supremacy of the Papacy was to continue twelve hundred and sixty years, it is evident that it must have been checked in the year 1798 A.D. Let us see if at that time anything happened to justify this conclusion. From “Chambers’ Cyclopedia,” article “Pius,” we quote:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.2}

“At length the [French] Directory ordered the invasion of Rome; Berthier entered the city, February 10, 1798, and took possession of the castle of St. Angelo. Pius [VI.] was called on to renounce his temporal sovereignty, and on his refusal, was seized, February 20, and carried away to Siena, and afterwards to the celebrated Certosa, or Carthusian monastery, of Florence. On the threatened advance of the Austro-Russian army in the following year, he was transferred to Grenoble, and finally to Valence on the Rhone, where, worn out by age and by the rigor of confinement, he died in August, 1799, in the eighty-second year of his age and the twenty-fourth of his pontificate.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.3}

Thus we see that from 538 to 1798 A.D. there were twelve hundred and sixty years of unbroken power, plainly fulfilling the prophecy. At that time the power of the Papacy was broken; indeed, it might well have been thought to be utterly destroyed. In March 1800, however, another Pope was chosen, and the Papacy has continued ever since, but with diminished power. Immediately after the enunciation of the dogma of Papal infallibility, July 21, 1870, Victor Emmanuel took advantage of the withdrawal of the French soldiers from Rome, to make that city the capital of his kingdom. Accordingly he entered it on September 20 of the same year, and that day marked the close of the temporal dominion of the Pope of Rome, who ever since has sulked in the Vatican, where, in order more effectually to work upon the sympathies of the people, he professes to be a prisoner. From his retreat, like Bunyan’s aged Pope in his cave, he growls out at those who despise his pretensions, “You will never mend till more of you be burnt;” for his one ambition is the restoration of the Papacy to its former power. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.4}

Whether this dream will ever be fully realized is not indicated in the prophecy under consideration; yet that, before the end, the power of the Papacy will increase far beyond what it is at the present, is plainly set forth in these words:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.5}

“I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.” Daniel 7:21, 22. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.6}

For several years it seemed as though every vestige of the power of the Papacy was irrecoverably gone; but “the Scripture cannot be broken,” and now, although it has no territorial dominion, there is no kingdom on earth that approaches it in power. The Pope rules not only the vast host of Catholics in every land under the sun, nearly all of whom hold their allegiance to him above that which they owe to their civil rulers, but he rules nations. Not alone is his influence supreme in Catholic countries, but Governments professedly Protestant look to him for help in difficult places. Germany, which so long opposed him, is now virtually subject to his dictation; England has invited him to help her settle her troubles with Ireland; the Czar of Russia has made overtures to him, as he needs his help in dealing with nihilism. When the Papal delegates came to America to bring to Cardinal Gibbons the insignia of his office, a Government vessel was sent out to meet them, and, on its return with them on board, the Papal flag floated from the mast-head, in the place of the stars and stripes. On the occasion of the jubilee of Pope Leo XIII., Sweden and Italy were the only nations that did not send him presents and congratulations. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.7}

The *Christian Union* (January 26, 1888) said that the presentation to Pope Leo XIII. of a copy of the Constitution of the United States, by the President, was “a sensible way of discharging what was, under the circumstances, almost a matter of national obligation.” And it gave, as a reason for this extraordinary statement, the still more extraordinary statement that “the Pope is a temporal prince, and the amenities which are paid to temporal princes are due him.” It further said: “It is not impossible that the time may come when the old antagonism of the Catholic and the Protestant may appear insignificant in view of the deeper antagonisms which shall make them essentially one.... Stranger things have happened in history than such a change of attitude as would be involved in the following of the Roman Catholic and the Protestant. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.8}

About the same time the Rev. Dr. Henry M. Field, editor of the New York *Evangelist* (Presbyterian), said through his paper:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.9}

“The late President Hitchcock [of Union Theological seminary] often said to us when we discussed the dangers to society from socialists and communists, that we might yet come to look upon the Roman Catholic Church as the most conservative power in the country, if, by its influence over the Irish, it should keep them from running into the excesses by which so many of the French and Germans were carried away.... Here is a tremendous power exercised over millions of our countrymen, and it is the height of folly and fanaticism to alienate it from us by standing always in an attitude of antagonism.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.10}

Other Protestant divines say that Catholicism is the only power that can stay the tide of socialism and anarchy, and openly counsel an alliance between Catholicism and Protestantism. In the *Christian at Work* (April 12 and 19, 1888) Prof. Charles A. Briggs, of Union Theological Seminary, New York, had an article entitled, “Is Rome an Ally or an Enemy, or Both?” in which he noted a few points of difference in matters which he considered non-essentials, but said: “In all matters of worship we are in essential concord with Roman Catholics, and we ought not to hesitate to make an alliance with them so far as possible to maintain the sanctity of the Sabbath as a day of worship,” etc. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.11}

And again:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.12}

“It is true that there is a great deal of immorality in the Roman Catholic Church in some countries, and we think it may be shown that as a rule Protestantism is productive of better morals than Romanism; but this, after all, is a question of more or less, and, to say the least, Protestantism has little to boast of. On all these questions it is of the highest importance that the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant churches should make an alliance.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.13}

As showing the progress toward this alliance, it is necessary only to state that during “Holy Week” of 1888, union services of the Catholic and all the Protestant churches were held in various cities in the United States. Various Protestant journals speak of the Pope as “Holy Father,” with him “a long reign and Godspeed in liberalizing policy,” and in many ways show their willingness to allow him whatever he may claim. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.14}

One more item, and it is a most significant one, must suffice on this point. In “Protestant” Germany, in the city of Cassel, where the majority of churches are Lutheran, a Rev. Thummel was indicted sometime in the year 1888, for attacking the Papacy and calling the Pope antichrist. In moving for nine months’ imprisonment for Mr. Thummel, the prosecuting attorney said:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.15}

“The defendant refers (or appeals) to Dr. M. Luther. First, it must be considered that Luther lived three hundred years ago, and that meanwhile the customs, the tone, and tastes, etc., have changed. If Luther lived to-day, and should say and write the same things that he did then, he would undoubtedly, by reason of section 496 of the Penal Code, be condemned.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.16}

History is making rapidly, and the student of prophecy will not have long to wait to see what shall be the end of all these things. Of one thing he may be certain, that “the triumphing of the wicked is short,” and when the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth shall say, “I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow,” then shall her plagues come upon her in one day,-death and mourning, and famine, and “she shall be utterly burned with fire.” The more rapidly the power and influence of the Papacy revives, the sooner will the Lord consume “that Wicked” with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy it with the brightness of is coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8); and then “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” Daniel 7:27. W. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 743.17}

**“The Week of Prayer” The Signs of the Times, 14, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

The most of our readers have no doubt noticed in the report of the General Conference the appointment of the week of prayer. Lest any should have forgotten it, we will make it again here. The order, in brief, is as follows: On Sabbath, December 8, the church, Tract Society, and Sabbath-school officers in every church, should assemble for consultation, and to lay plans for the successful carrying on of the work during the meeting. The time devoted to the special meetings is one day more than a week, since it includes two Sabbaths, beginning Sabbath, December 15, and ending Sabbath, December 22. Appropriate readings will be sent to each company, for every day’s meeting. These will serve to direct each meeting into a certain channel, in which prayer and testimonies should follow. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 744.1}

Wednesday and Thursday, December 19 and 20, are set apart as days of fasting and prayer. While the entire week is to be devoted to the worship of God, these should be improved in seeking God in an especial manner. If our brethren and sisters have on these days the kind of fast that is described by Isaiah (chap. 58), in which they shall “break every yoke,” confessing and cutting loose from every sin which has bound them down, and kept them from enjoying the fullness of God’s blessing, then they will be well prepared to enter heartily into the services of Sabbath the 23rd, which has been appointed as a day of praise and thanksgiving. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 744.2}

And then let them assemble on Christmas eve, and instead of selfishly receiving, let them, with a perfect heart, bring a willing offering for the foreign missions, and thus be twice blessed. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 744.3}

Brethren and sisters of California, has not God greatly blessed you during the past year? Have you not received special blessings by his Spirit? If you have tasted that the Lord is precious, and have been made to realize something of “the unsearchable riches of Christ,” will it not be a great privilege to devote a thank-offering to his name? May the Lord abundantly bless all who seek him during the week of prayer. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 744.4}

**“Missionary Success” The Signs of the Times, 14, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

It is not the business of Christian missions to convert the world, that is, to lead all nations to accept of Christianity. In the divine plan, Christians, are to preach the gospel to persuade men, to be the means, under God, of gathering “*out of*” the nations “a people for his name.” Acts 15:14. And that disciple who does this in God’s way, who, aided by the Spirit, preaches the word, shows men their lost condition, instructs them in the way of life, persuades them to accept of the only Saviour, Christ Jesus, and thus is the means of saving a few souls from their sins,-that missionary’s work is a success. His mission is not a failure. The mission of Christ to Tyre and Sidon, although but one person’s heart was reached, and that a poor Canaanite, was a success. Mark 7:24-31. Paul’s mission to Lystra was as much a success as it was at Berea or Corinth. The world will not be purified of wickedness till Christ comes; it is our mission as Christians to warn and persuade men to flee from the wrath to come and to accept of Christ. and when the redeemed are gathered “*out of* every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation,” the work will be wholly a success, Christ’s triumph will be complete. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 745.1}

**“The Commentary. Second Epistle of Peter” The Signs of the Times, 14, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

**2 Peter 3:7-12.**

1. State the argument which the apostle Peter says the last-day scoffers will urge against the doctrine of Christ’s second coming. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.1}

2. Show the falsity of their statement. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.2}

3. How is it that these scoffers are so blind? Compare 2 Peter 3:3, last part, with 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12, and Hebrews 3:13. See note. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.3}

4. What has the word of the Lord spoken concerning the fate of this earth? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.4}

“But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” 2 Peter 3:7. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.5}

5. What is said of God’s relation to time? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.6}

“But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” Verse 8. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.7}

“For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.” Psalm 90:4. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.8}

6. What important lesson may we learn from this? See note. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.9}

7. Why is it that God has so long delayed his threatened judgments? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.10}

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.11}

8. Yet how are the majority of wicked men affected by his merciful patience? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.12}

“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” Ecclesiastes 8:11. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.13}

9. What effect does the favor of God have upon these wicked scoffers? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.14}

“Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.” Isaiah 26:10. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.15}

10. Because the judgments of God are delayed, how does the condition of the wicked often appear, as compared with that of the righteous? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.16}

“For I was envious at the foolish, when is saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm.” “Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency.” Psalm 73:3, 34, 7, 13. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.17}

11. What do they themselves think? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.18}

“The inward thought is, that their houses shall continue forever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.” Psalm 49:11. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.19}

12. But how will it be in reality? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.20}

“Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him; but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.” Ecclesiastes 8:12, 13. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.21}

13. At what time shall the proud be humbled? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.22}

“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.” Isaiah 2:12. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.23}

14. How will the day of the Lord come upon them? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.24}

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” 2 Peter 3:10. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.25}

15. What will they be saying when the time of their destruction thus suddenly bursts upon them? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.26}

“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.27}

16. What will take place in the day of the Lord? 2 Peter 3:10. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.28}

17. What does the prophet Isaiah say of that day? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.29}

“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.” “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.” Isaiah 6, 7, 9, 10. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.30}

18. What is the testimony of Zephaniah? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.31}

“The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord; the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord’s wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy; for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.” Chap. 1:14-18. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.32}

19. Is it a time to be desired? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.33}

“Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?” Amos 5:18-20. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.34}

20. What was said about it by a righteous man to whom the Lord granted a prophetic view of it? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.35}

“When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble; when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops.” Habakkuk 3:16. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.36}

21. Who will pass through that terrible time unharmed? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.37}

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.” Psalm 91:1, 5-10. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.38}

22. What will protect them? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.39}

“I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.” Verses 2-4. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.40}

23. In view of the great events that are surely coming, what should be our constant thought? {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.41}

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?” 2 Peter 3:11, 12. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.42}

**NOTES**

“Lest your hearts be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” This is a most forcible expression, and the truth which it suggests should receive far more attention than it does. When a man deliberately resolves to pursue a certain course, even though he knows it to be wrong, he will very soon come to the firm belief that that course is right, and will, of course, be incapable of receiving the truth on the subject. All are familiar with the story of the old Indian chief who was quite favorably inclined toward Christianity as the missionary talked with him, until he was told that all men would rise at the last day. “What!” said he, “will all who have died in battle rise again? And shall I have to meet those whom I have slain?” Being answered in the affirmative, he exclaimed, “It isn’t so; I won’t have it so; they shall not rise.” After that no amount of reasoning could convince him that there would be a resurrection. In Dr. Mark Hopkins’s “Evidences of Christianity,” lecture 1, occurs the following apt statement of the way in which men’s desires overrule their reason:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.43}

“‘Men,’ says Hobbs, ‘appeal from custom to reason, and from reason to custom, as it serves their turn, receding from custom when their interest requires it, and setting themselves against reason as oft as reason is against them; which is the cause that the doctrine of right and wrong is perpetually disputed both by the pen and the sword; whereas the doctrine of lines and figures is not so, because men care not, in that subject, what is truth, as it is a thing that crosses no man’s ambition, or profit, or lust. For, I doubt not, if it had been a thing contrary to any man’s right of dominion, or to the interest of men that have dominion, that the three angles of a triangle should be equal to two angles of a square, that the doctrine should [would] have been, if not disputed, yet, by the burning of all books on geometry, suppressed, as far as he whom it concerned was able.’ ‘This,’ says Hallam, from whose work I make the quotation, ‘does not exaggerate the pertinacity of mankind in resisting the evidence of truth when it thwarts the interests or passions of any particular sect or community.’ Let a man who hears the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid announced for the first time, trace the steps of the demonstration, and he *would* believe it is true; but let him know that as soon as he does perceive the evidence of the proposition, so as to believe it on that ground, he shall lose his right eye, and he will never trace the evidence, or come to that belief which results from the force of the only proper evidence. You may tell him it is true, but he will reply that he does not know, he does not see it to be so.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.44}

The same thing is usually the case when the truth cuts across one’s cherished sins. Says Hopkins: “Let the mists that steam up before the intellect from a corrupt heart, be dispersed, and truths, before obscure, shine out as the noonday.” No man can think the thoughts of God unless he walks in the ways of God. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.45}

The “sure word of prophecy” tells us again and again that this earth shall be destroyed by fire, and that in that fire the ungodly shall be burned up. Scoffers say that they see no evidence that any such event will ever take place; but the apostle Peter assures us that the instrument of the earth’s destruction is already prepared, and is stored within it. Just as surely as the earth was once destroyed by water, so surely will it again be destroyed by fire. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.46}

“But these prophecies were spoken hundreds, and some of them thousands, of years ago, and there is no more evidence of their fulfillment now than there was when they were uttered.” Thus argues the scoffer; but it is a vain argument; (1) because it is not true, and (2) because of the following statement:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.47}

“But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” 2 Peter 3:8. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 746.48}

God “inhabiteth eternity.” The flight of time makes no difference with his plans. Compared with his eternity, the entire 6,000 years of earth’s existence is but a span. Says the psalmist, “For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is passed, and as a watch in the night.” Psalm 90:4. Therefore the apostle concludes that “the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness.” That which seems to men forgetfulness of the promise, is only a kindly delay to allow dilatory men to secure the promise. In God’s reckoning, it is only as the three days’ grace, which men allow for the payment of a promissory note. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 747.1}

It should not be forgotten that while a thousand years is with the Lord as one day, one day is as a thousand years. This is too often overlooked. While he may take a thousand years for the fulfillment of a promise, and then it will be the same as though performed the next day, he can do in one day the work of a thousand years. Therefore there is no warrant for settling down to carnal ease, thinking that it will necessarily be a long time yet before the work of God on earth can be accomplished. “For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.” Romans 9:28. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 747.2}

“For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them.” This refers to a time when men will not simply be predicting peace and safety, but will proclaim that it has actually come. For many years men have been teaching that a millennium of perfect peace and righteousness would precede the coming of the Lord. The members of the National Reform Association say that when Christianity is recognized and enforced by law, then the millennium will have come, and that wars, famines, and pestilence will cease. In the National Reform Convention held at Monmouth, Ill., Sept. 29, 1884, and reported in the *Christian Statesman* of November 6, M. A. Gault said:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 747.3}

“We do not flatter ourselves when we say that the glorious millennial day will be ushered in by the triumph of this movement.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 747.4}

So when they shall have gained their object, the Scripture will be fulfilled, which says: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” Isaiah 2:2-4. Thus they will be saying, “Peace and safety,” and then suddenly, like a thief in the night, when they are unprepared, destruction from the Almighty shall come upon them. Read the remainder of Isaiah 2. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 747.5}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

Don’t fail to read the matter concerning the week of prayer, on page 744 of this issue. Read it first, for it is important that you begin to think about it in earnest. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.1}

The power of the mob in London was never shown more forcibly in anything than in the resignation of Sir Charles Warren, Chief of Police of that city. His withdrawal was at first supposed to be due to his failure to apprehend the Whitechapel murderers, but it is now asserted that it was brought about by the influence of the disorderly element in the metropolis of the civilized world, the capital city of “Christian England.” If this be true, a grave danger threatens London. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.2}

Picking up an Oakland daily paper a day or two ago, we read the heading, not the body, of a report of a slogging contest at the rooms of one of the “athletic” clubs. The heading ran thus: “Soto and Akers Fight Nine Lively Rounds in the Presence of a Throng of Gentlemen.” Gentlemen, indeed! Very *gentle* men they must be to sit with eager eyes and watch two men pound each other. Be it known that no gentleman will ever be a willing witness of a fight of any kind. If sloggers and their abettors are going to appropriate the title, it will soon be a disgrace to be called a gentleman. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.3}

Several of the powers of Europe are engaged in quietly dividing the Dark Continent among them. Belgium has the Congo State, England and Germany are taking possession of an immense territory between the great lakes and Zanzibar; and Portugal, too, is preparing to make considerable territorial acquisitions. The plan of this latter Government, as announced by the Foreign Minister, is to extend railroads to the very heart of Africa, reaching even Nyassa and the equatorial lakes. “All this,” says the Chicago *Advance*, “would help to civilize the Dark Continent, if it were not for the unfortunate fact that Portugal and Germany are both extending the awful liquor traffic among the natives.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.4}

It is stated that the Roman Catholic Church, while claiming 2,750,000 converts, or adherents, among the heathen, reports only 4,504 schools and 110,742 scholars, about twenty-one scholars to a school; while, according to their last general statistics, Protestant foreign missions have 11,880 schools and 645,886 scholars, an average of about fifty-eight scholars to each school. The number of scholars of Protestant foreign missionary schools is about six times the number of those in Roman Catholic schools of the same kind! {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.5}

“Such facts,” says the New York *Evangelist*, “would seem to justify the saying that the Romish Church holds that ignorance is the mother of devotion.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.6}

Several Chicago speculators were recently discussing their business methods, when one of them remarked: “The trouble with us speculators is, we keep flattering ourselves that we are merchants. The sooner we stop calling ourselves merchants, and begin to admit that we are gamblers and nothing else, the quicker we will come down to the commonsense basis.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.7}

It would be a good thing if the law-makers of the several States would take the same view of the matter, and protect the public from the rapacity of those who speculate and grow rich upon the necessities of the people. It would be a blessing which thousands would appreciate. If the several Legislatures that meet this coming winter will only turn their attention earnestly to framing much-needed legislation, they will have little time to spend upon Sunday laws and other schemes for enabling the majority to coerce the consciences of the minority. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.8}

At the meeting of the Congregational club in San Francisco on a recent Monday, an Oakland minister read a paper giving reasons why the masses are not in the churches. One reason which he assigned was “the asceticism of the churches in regard to amusements and diversions”! As though any such thing existed in the church to-day to any considerable degree! The popular churches are certainly about as far removed from asceticism as anything can well be. They have yielded one point after another, until the line of demarktion between them and the world is scarcely discernible; indeed, the moral standard of the churches is little if any higher than that which is required by “society;” they both tolerate the same things. Dancing, card playing, and theater going are about as common in one as in the other; and it does seem strange that a Christian minister would advocate letting the standard still lower. Has it indeed come to this, that the churches must be filled at the expense of crushing out of them what little semblance of pure and undefiled religion still remains in them? Is so, surely we have fallen upon evil times. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.9}

At the last meeting of the Monday Congregational Club, in San Francisco, one of the ministers read a paper entitled, “Why the Masses Do Not Attend the Churches.” Among the principal reasons he cited “the unfortunate circumstances of our having no Sunday law.” “People,” said he, “go to saloons, and engage in gambling and lottery schemes, instead of going to church.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.10}

The gentleman doubtless revealed more than he intended to. He showed clearly the one real object of all Sunday legislation, namely, to fill up the empty churches. Men may tlak as much as they please about Sunday laws being mere “police regulations,” intended for the physical good of the people; but we well know, what they cannot always keep concealed, that they are for no other purpose than to compel people to listen to preaching which has lost its power to draw them. They assure us that they have no idea of compelling anybody to keep Sunday, or to attend church against his will; but their assertion is not in harmony with reason. Does anybody need to be told that when they have passed a Sunday law in order to fill up their empty churches, they will enforce not only the letter but the spirit of that law, and compel attendance on church service, when it is not done voluntarily? We trow not. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.11}

This matter of Sunday laws is now a live issue. In many State Legislatures, as well as in Congress, organized and persistent efforts will be made during the coming winter to secure the passage of such laws; and the friends of religious freedom should be on the alert. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.12}

The *Christian Register* (Unitarian), in discussing the Sunday question, says:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.13}

“Let Sunday be surrendered to the goddess of pleasure or greed, and selfishness and indulgence will tarnish its sacred uses. Lay down the principle that Sunday is to be used supremely for moral and religious culture, in the purest service of God and the unselfish service of humanity, and the matter of its observance is a matter of minor consequence.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.14}

Exactly; compel everybody to keep Sunday *religiously*, and “the manner of its observance” will then be “a matter of minor consequence.” But it must be guarded carefully against “greed and selfishness”-as it already is in more than one State, railroad companies, hotels, etc., being allowed to carry on business, while conscientious Sabbatarians are arrested and fined for doing ordinary labor upon Sunday after having religiously observed the seventh day. Sunday laws are *not*, as the *Register* asserts, in the interests of “the purest service of God and the unselfish service of humanity,” but they are directly in the line of religious bigotry and intolerance. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.15}

At the recent convention of the National Women’s Christian Temperance Union, Mrs. Mary T. Lathrop made one of the principal speeches, in the course of which she said, addressing the press and politicians of New York:- {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.16}

“You have sold out our civilization by the sea-coast, have imported pauper labor, for fear you would have to pay honest wages to workingmen. The manufacturers of this country, who are falling on the necks of laboring men, with many tears, during this political campaign, have been sending their paid agents over to Europe to bring this kind of people here, until *you have trodden on our Sabbath*, and sold out our civilization in these great Eastern populations to the Philistine.” {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.17}

It seems as though people are getting pretty well advanced, when they can reprove, others for traveling upon “our Sabbath.” God pronounces a blessing upon those who turn away their foot from the Sabbath, from doing their pleasure on his holy day; and when the American people shall enact laws against the violation of *their* Sabbath,-the rival of the Sabbath of the Lord,-we cannot see how much better they will be than the man of sin, “the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped.” Then we shall have not only Papal Rome, but Papal America. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.18}

The Pope has recently received hundreds of telegrams inquiring if he intends to quit Rome. Replies have been sent that nothing has been decided upon. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.19}

**“Sabbath-school Lessons” The Signs of the Times, 14, 47.**

E. J. Waggoner

The pamphlet containing the lessons for the Senior Division of our Sabbath-schools, for the first six months of 1889, is now ready, and orders to any extent will be filled as fast as ordered. The lessons are from the Old Testament, taking up some of the most striking features from the appearing of Moses before Pharaoh, with the demand that he should let Israel go, to the attempted cursing of that people by Balaam. The lessons are practical, and most of them have quite copious notes. They have received the careful criticism of a large committee of ministers and Sabbath-school workers from different parts of the country, and we believe that they are well calculated to benefit those who give them careful study. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.20}

The pamphlet, in accordance with the resolution passed at the late session of the International Association, has been put up in a form convenient to be carried in the coat pocket, which we think will add very much to its effectiveness. Students, as well as teachers, will find it greatly to their advantage to have the entire series of lessons, especially in time of review; so let the orders come in at once. Price, 10 cents. Address, Pacific Press, Oakland, Cal. {SITI December 7, 1888, p. 752.21}

**“Sensuous Religion” The Signs of the Times, 14, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

One of the tendencies of a worldly Christianity (?) has ever been to compromise with pagan tradition, and use worldly methods and means which appeal to the sensuous nature, for the propagation of religion among the masses. The evident desire seems to be, not to convert individuals, but to affect the nations. This policy in the early centuries of the Christian era developed the Papacy, which has proved such a curse to the world. We see the same tendency gaining ground again, and it will lead to the same result. Canon Taylor, an eminent English church man, as quoted in the *Christian Union* of November 8, thinks that missions are a failure under the present methods, and he advocates such methods as were pursued by some of the priests of Rome, who sprinkled into the faith whole congregations at once. He thinks the methods of the Salvation Army, followed already by the Church of England at home, preferable to those of the missionaries, and thus describes the Army’s work:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 757.1}

“Mr. Tacher, their leader, has given proof of his sincerity, by surrendering a lucrative post in the Indian Civil Service. He heads a barefooted regiment of two hundred soldiers, who go for the life, who give up everything they have, who receive no payment, but are content with a bare subsistence. They abstain from the flesh of animals, the slaughter of which is an abomination to the Hindu; they touch no alcohol; their food is a handful of rice and curry, which they beg from day to day from those to whom they minister. Like the natives, they oil their bodies with c elya oil, they go barefoot, with turbans to protect them from the sun, and their dress is a few yards of calico, costing about five shillings. The whole maintenance of each missionary does not exceed two shillings a week, or five pounds a year. Like the successful Moravian missionaries in South Africa or the West Indies, their object is to become natives-to live among the natives exactly as the natives live, simply exhibiting a nobler life and higher aims.... The natives like the drums and tom-toms, the lively singing, and the bright banners and the processions, and follow them in crowds, while they find the church missionary society services on the Islington model dull and slow. It may not be a high ideal of religion, but it appeals to Indians, just as it appeals to the least educated classes at home.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 757.2}

Upon this the *Christian Union* offers the following remarks, which we heartily indorse, because they are in harmony with the Scriptures:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 757.3}

“We have no acquaintance among the English missionaries, but some among those who have gone out from America. Some of them, doubtless, are as fond of ease as their fellow-laborers at home; but there are many of them who would not hesitate to adopt Salvation Army methods if convinced that these were the best methods to promote the conversion of the world to Christ. But the do not think so; and we share their disbelief. If the world is a wreck, and the function of the church is simply to pack out a few elect struggling wretches who are “saved” when they leave changed their creed or their ritual, have substituted for an ignorant belief in a Hindu Triad a belief nearly as ignorant in the Christian Trinity, or have left following the priestly procession in honor of Brahm for that of the Salvation Army, the method of the Salvationists is a very tolerable method. The tom-tom and the bright banner are more likely to attract them than a sermon. They may not live any better lives for following the tom-tom; but that is no matter, for the object of the Salvation Army is not to teach them how to live, but to prepare them, by a sort of Protestant and unpriestly extreme unction, to die. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 757.4}

“We do not so understand Christianity. Christianity is a life, and it is the function of the church to teach men how to live. The missionary who lives as the native lives does nothing to teach him a better life. it is true that we are in danger of mistaking our Western theology for Christian life; true that we are in danger of trying to make men followers of a middle-class Englishman or American rather than of Jesus Christ.... To sprinkle them with water by the hundred or the thousand and call them converts is a pleasant and may even be a pious illusion, but is none the less an illusion. To induce them to abandon filthy habits and live cleanly lives, to cease to be animals and to become as children of God, is a much more difficult and a much slower process. Every civilized home in a pagan land is an object lesson, and it is one which the missionary ought not to abandon for drums and tom-toms.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 757.5}

**“‘Seventy Times Seven’” The Signs of the Times, 14, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.” Matthew 18:21, 22. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.1}

Doubtless Peter thought that he had stretched the matter of forgiveness to its utmost limit when he asked if he should forgive his brother seven times; and the reply of Jesus must have astonished him. Seventy times seven is practically without limit, for remember that this is with only one, and there are very few that would be called upon to forgive one brother four hundred and ninety times. Or even supposing a brother were so great an offender as that, where is the soul so mean as to keep tally of every call for forgiveness, so as not to exceed the exact number? One who would do that would not really forgive at all. Surely the Lord has not left any provision for the cherishing of hard feelings. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.2}

But we have something which makes the case even stronger. Luke (17:4) thus records the words of Christ concerning our dealing with a brother: “And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.” Seven times in a day, days without number, are we to forgive the one who trespasses against us, if forgiveness be needed so often. And we cannot help thinking that the text refers especially to the same trespass repeated. Thus, if a brother shall do the same thing seven times in one day, and each time ask forgiveness, we are to grant it freely. If he does not ask it, we are nevertheless to feel like granting it. Whether or not the text contemplates the same act repeated, it certainly includes that. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.3}

Our object in calling attention to these texts is not exhortation, but encouragement. It is of very little use to exhort a man to forgive, as a matter of duty, if he has not himself felt the touch of divine forgiveness, which is the spring of all tenderness. But we write for the encouragement of those who feel that they have sinned too greatly to be forgiven, or that they have so often asked forgiveness for a single failing, and so often repeated the same fault, that God must be weary of forgiving. God is not a man. Says he to us:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.4}

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8, 9. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.5}

Those who despondently imagine that God cannot forgive their oft-repeated sin, virtually say that God is not so forgiving as he demands that we shall be, and in so doing they greatly wrong God. His infinity is no less in the direction of love and tenderness than it is in that of wisdom and power. Why, we cannot even know how to forgive if we do not learn from him. And whether we know how to forgive or not, the fact remains that we are required to forgive the same brother times without number, even to seven times in one day, for the same offense, and that God is infinitely more willing to forgive than man can be. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.6}

This is not said for the purpose of encouraging anybody in wrong-doing; and let no one say that the emphasizing of this matter will lead people to think that they can sin with impunity. If the forgiving love of God would tend to confirm men in sin, God would not have made it known. The fact is that nothing but the love of God can turn a man away from sin. The world was in sin, and God manifested to them his infinite love, in order that they might be able to cease from sin. The fact that some will despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, does not cause him to withdraw his love, and should not prevent us from dwelling upon it, for the encouragement of any who may want to do God’s will. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.7}

But it is not alone by what God requires of us that we may learn what he is anxious to do for us. The death of the Son of God is the pledge of God’s infinite love for us, and of his inconceivable desire to cleanse us from sin by the application of his healing forgiveness. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:32. The gift of Christ comprises everything. And trusting in that unspeakable gift, the humblest and most debased sinner may look up from the midst of his sore temptations, and confidently say:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.8}

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:37-39. W. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.9}

**“A Presbyterian on Spiritualism” The Signs of the Times, 14, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

In a recent sermon upon Spiritualism, Rev. Dr. Gibson, of the First United Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, said:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.10}

“We see modern Spiritualism coming to the front under the garb of religion, with deceptions and impostures, the enormity of which we can scarcely realize; it makes us shudder to think that it dares to assume the holy raiment of religion. Yet such is the case, for it claims to be a religion, and is deceiving a great many under this cloak, and it is therefore the duty of every minister in the land to tear away the veil and expose the evil beneath the covering... {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.11}

“I charge it with being a curse to moral and social relations and conditions. It is sundering the ties which bind families together. The very foundations of society are being shattered, the sanctity of our homes destroyed, by the degrading influence of the system. It destroys the mind, the body, and the soul. It so acts upon the nerves that harmony of the body is destroyed. As to the mind, go to our asylums and you will see evidences of its work, while it ruins and kills the soul. I tell you that when a person puts his foot inside a séance room he is half an infidel, and when under Spiritualistic influences is wholly one, and he goes to these creatures, who, if not themselves deluded, are ready to delude, and he is destroyed.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.12}

This is putting it none too strong; Spiritualism is a monstrous evil; it is imposture and imposition from beginning to end, but not in the sense the Doctor imagines. His idea is that the whole system is one of trickery and sleight-of-hand; whereas the Scriptures teach that it is the work of evil spirits. “They are the spirits of devils, working miracles,” says the divine word, and implicit faith in that word is the only safeguard against their Satanic influences. The churches and ministers may denounce Spiritualism as much as they please; they may point out the evils which attend it; they may show that in many cases it destroys its votaries soul and body, making them not only mental but physical wrecks; but so long as they uphold the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and deny the inspired statement that “the dead know not anything,” just so long will they oppose in vain the progress of this blighting error. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.13}

Dr. Gibson asks, “What are we to do to meet it?” and then answers his own question thus: “Why hold up the blessed word of God, and people will not want to go elsewhere for consolation, for that lies in the divine word of God. The guiding, the comfort you need, is found in the illumination of the word of God, and not in the sayings and teachings of these debasing creatures, who seek to dupe and lead you to your destruction.” The answer is good so far as it goes, but in applying the remedy the Doctor, as well as thousands of others, stops far short of the root of the matter. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.14}

The apostle says, “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep,” that is, concerning the dead, and it is to a knowledge of the teachings of the Scriptures regarding the dead, as well as concerning the duties of the living, that we must look for that which will arm us against Spiritualistic influences. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.15}

No man who rejects the plain testimony of the word of God concerning the dead, and in its stead clings to the vain traditions of men, to the teachings of heathen philosophy, has any reasonable assurance that he will not sometime become a Spiritualist. Says the psalmist: “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” And the only safety for any is to believe just what this text says, and to reject the popular idea that the dead know much more than the living, and that they are hovering around watching over their friends and guarding their interests. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 758.16}

**“Anarchists in Chicago” The Signs of the Times, 14, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

When the five Anarchist conspirators were hanged in Chicago on the 11th of November, 1887, it was generally taken for granted that Anarchy had received its death blow in that city, if not in the entire country. Subsequent events have not, however, shown that to be the case. Indeed, it is asserted by the Chicago *News* of the 30th ult., that upon the day of the execution of the Anarchists a small band of their friends met in a basement under a saloon not far from Parson’s old home, where they swore to avenge the execution of their leaders, and that ever since these desperate men have been maturing plans for this revenge. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 760.1}

Last July a conspiracy was discovered to blow up a number opf prominent men concerned in prosecuting the Haymarket murderers; a little later regularly organized Anarchist Sunday-schools were discovered, and a late dispatch states that these still exist. Only a few days since one of these schools was found to contain one hundred and twenty children, ranging from five to fourteen years of agae, seated on long benches, listening intently to what the teacher was explaining to them about Johann Most. They were told that Spies and Parsons had been murdered by capitalists, and the teachers referred to the dead Anarchists as martyrs. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 760.2}

The day following the discovery of this school of crime, the Executive Committee of the newly organized local Anarchist society, known as the Arbiter Band, issued a circular calling a large mass-meeting for the purpose of devising means by which to found Anarchist schools for children throughout the city. The circular was widely distributed. As the meeting was held on the 2nd inst., the day of closing this paper, we cannot give the results. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 760.3}

The same day that the circular was distributed, the Anarchists and their sympathizers had a meeting in the suburb of Lake View, which had been advertised as a free entertainment. After gymnastic exercises and singing, the curtain over the stage went up, disclosing tableaux. A prominent feature was a white bust of Spies. In the rear was a female personating the Goddess of Liberty. To her right was another representing Justice, with sword and scale in hand, but her arm was held by a little girl, who sneeringly pointed at the Goddess of Liberty. Next was a man in black representing Law. His hands were thrown up, and a typical Anarchist held a sword to his breast. In front was another Anarchist, armed with an ax. Beneath his feet were the stars and stripes, and over his head waved the crimson flag. Several citizens of Lake View manifested their disapproval of the tableaux, and left the hall, but the majority of those present applauded wildly. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 760.4}

Certainly Anarchism is far from being dead in Chicago, and there are good reasons for believing that the condition of affairs is not much better in a number of other large cities in various parts of the country. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 760.5}

**“European War-cloud” The Signs of the Times, 14, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

It is only a few weeks since the world was assured that the war-cloud which for some time had been hanging like a dark pall over Europe had been lifted, and that there was a great probability that a general disarmament would soon take place. Now, however, there has been a change, and men are again discussing with the utmost *sang-froid* the possibilities of a conflict, which, when it comes, must in the very nature of things be the most terrible which the world has ever witnessed. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 760.6}

A few days since, after referring to demands of the Austrian Government for increased appropriations for military purposes, to the sums required for a like purpose in Belgium, to the increased activity in military preparations in France, to the increasing enlistments in Germany, and to the new vessels which are commenced to be built for the navy in Great Britain, a secular paper said:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 760.7}

“With all these things in view we may well ask, What is to be the end of all this? It is not credible that these powers should go on accumulating military stores, raising the size of their armies, making ready for mobilization of reserves, making new and improved cannon and small arms, simply for the purpose of having them. There must come a time, and that soon, when the people will demand from their respective Governments a reason for all this military and naval preparation, and to such a demand there can be but one answer.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 760.8}

“This activity in preparing for war does not necessarily imply that war is imminent. Still, all this must come to an end, and it must end in one of two ways, war or disarmament. Of the two, a general war is the more probable.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 760.9}

Yes, from a human standpoint war “is the more probable,” and we *know* from the sure word of prophecy that it is certain to come, and that long ere this the conflict would have begun had it not been for the restraining power of God. The fiat has gone forth, “Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.” And until that work has been accomplished, the ambition of grasping ... will be curbed; but when the winds are loosed, when the passions of wicked men are no longer restrained by the power of God, not all the statecraft in the world can avert the terrible catastrophe for a single day. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 760.10}

**“School Meetings on the Sabbath” The Signs of the Times, 14, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

A correspondent asks: “What is a Sabbath-keeper’s duty where they hold school meetings upon the Sabbath? We hold that it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath, and as our children’s interests are involved, why is it not right to attend such meetings even on the Sabbath?” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.1}

It is not for us to say what is right or what is wrong; the law of God must settle all such questions, and it would seem that that law does answer this question in no uncertain way. “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” is the divine command, and it ought not to be difficult for those who profess to honor the Sabbath to decide whether attending school meetings would be keeping it holy or not. If the interests of one man’s children require him to attend to such business on the Sabbath, why may not the interests of another man’s children require that he work upon the Sabbath in order that they may be as well fed and as comfortably clothed as his neighbor’s children? In short, what should be the standard of our actions, self-interest or the law of God? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.2}

It is safe to say that no Sabbath keeper can attend a school meeting upon the Sabbath, and retain either the approval of his own conscience or the respect of his Sunday-keeping neighbors-two very important things, the first because if his own heart condemn him he knows that God is greater than his heart and will condemn him also (1 John 3:20); the second, because our influence for good is dependent upon the respect in which we are held by those who know how our lives correspond with our profession. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.3}

**“Future Probation” The Signs of the Times, 14, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

Bishop Taylor, of Africa, whose work among the heathen enables him to speak with the assurance of positive knowledge, preached a discourse recently in Dr. Talmage’s Church, Brooklyn, N.Y., in which he showed not only from Scripture, but from the facts as they exist, the absurdity of the idea of a future probation for the heathen, on the ground that in this life they have not had a chance. The *Independent* says:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.4}

“He spoke of the readiness of the heathen in Africa to listen to Christian teachings, and of the remarkable evidence given by this unenlightened race of the prevailing belief, among all the tribes there, in a ‘great ruler’ and ‘creator,’ to whom they must give an account at death. These poor heathen, he declared, had sufficient light to teach them that right living would meet with a reward in the future, and wrong-doing with severe punishment. He gave some remarkable instances illustrating the correctness of this assertion. He denounced the doctrine of future probation, and declared there was no Scripture foundation for it.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.5}

“The true Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9), enables every creature to know that some things are right, and that others are wrong, and to have the approval of conscience when they do the right, and a sense of shame or fear when they do wrong. See Romans 2:14, 15. This life is every man’s chance; and he who does not improve it will find that his only chance has gone. God has no other plan of salvation for those who reject this. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.6}

**“The Commentary. Second Epistle of Peter, 2 Peter 3:13-18” The Signs of the Times, 14, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

**(Lesson 10. Sabbath, Dec. 29.)**

1. Give a statement of some of the things that will take place in the day of the Lord. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.7}

2. To what condition will the earth be reduced? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.8}

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?” 2 Peter 3:10-12. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.9}

3. Notwithstanding this, for what may we confidently look? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.10}

“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” Verse 13. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.11}

4. Where is this promise recorded? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.12}

“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” Isaiah 65:17. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.13}

5. What is said of the beauty of the new earth? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.14}

“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.” “For the Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.” Isaiah 51:3. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.15}

6. What class of people shall live in it? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.16}

“Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.” Isaiah 60:21. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.17}

“Nevertheless we, according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” 2 Peter 3:13. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.18}

7. How long will they possess it? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.19}

“Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.” Isaiah 60:21. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.20}

“The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.” Psalm 37:29. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.21}

“But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.” Daniel 7:18. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.22}

8. Will they be troubled by disease? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.23}

“And the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.” Isaiah 33:24. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.24}

9. What change will be wrought in the righteous ones who now are afflicted? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.25}

“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.” Isaiah 35:5, 6. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.26}

10. What is said of the peace and quiet of that land? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.27}

“And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.” “When it shall hail, coming down on the forest; and the city shall be low on a low place.” Isaiah 32:17, 19. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.28}

“And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.” Isaiah 54:13, 14. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.29}

“Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.” Isaiah 60:18. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.30}

11. How will the people stand related to the great Source of wisdom and peace? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.31}

“And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.” Isaiah 54:13. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.32}

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.” Revelation 21:3, 4. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.33}

“And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.” Revelation 22:3, 4. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.34}

12. Seeing we look for such glorious things when Christ comes, what should we do? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.35}

“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” 2 Peter 3:14. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.36}

13. How should we regard the fact that God has so long delayed the great consummation? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.37}

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” “And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you.” Verses 9, 15. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.38}

14. What apostle besides Peter has said much about the second coming of Christ? Verse 15, last part. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.39}

15. How extensively does Peter say that Paul has spoken of these things? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.40}

“As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.” Verse 16. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.41}

16. Is there one of Paul’s epistles which does not refer to the second coming of Christ and the Judgment? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.42}

17. What epistles contain a mention of this event in every chapter?-*The epistles to the Thessalonians*. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.43}

18. In view of the glorious future that is promised to the righteous, and the great wickedness that will prevail just before the Lord comes, of what should we beware? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.44}

“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.” Verse 17. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.45}

19. In view of the failure of God’s people in the past, what warning is given us? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.46}

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” 1 Corinthians 10:12. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.47}

20. How alone can we keep from being led away by the error of the wicked? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.48}

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” 2 Peter 3:18. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.49}

21. To whom and for what should we ascribe glory? {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.50}

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.” Jude 24, 15; 2 Peter 3:18. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 761.51}

**NOTES**

In the epistles of Paul there are “some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction.” Notice that it is not said that there is anything in Paul’s epistles that is impossible to be understood. It is only “hard to be understood.” But that which is hard to be understood may be understood by hard study. Moreover it is only the unlearned and unstable that wrest them to their own destruction. The double-minded, or unstable, will take the strongest statements concerning the law and the gospel, and will construe them so as to make them teach the abolition of the law and consequently of the gospel. It is only the “unlearned,” those who do not look beneath the surface, who do this. Those who delight in the law of God, and who know Christ, “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” have a key with which they may unlock any of the mysteries of that most profound writer. Notice further, also, that those who wrest the words of Paul out of their legitimate meaning, do the same thing also to the other scriptures. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 762.1}

“But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” This text is misquoted in two ways. A very common misquotation is, “Grow in... knowledge of the truth.” There is no such text to be found in the Bible, although this text amounts to the same thing, because Christ is the truth, as well as the way and the life. John 14:16. The poet says of Christ:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 762.2}

*“In thy life the law appears  
Drawn out in living characters.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 762.3}*

He was the law personified. If one wishes to know just how much righteousness the law of God requires, he has only to study the life and character of Christ. All the beauty and holiness of Christ were simply the manifestation of the law of love which prompted every act. It is in the life and death of Christ that we can get more exalted ideas of the holiness and majesty of God’s law. If we do not grow in knowledge of Christ, we can never have the law written in our hearts, for it is only in him that we can be made the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 762.4}

Another misquotation is sometimes heard in prayers to Christ, that we may “grow in grace and in thy knowledge.” The idea seems to be that we must grow in the knowledge that Christ has, so as to approach him in wisdom. But this is not the proper idea. We are simply and literally to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. We must know him intimately. He must sup with us, and we wit him; but he must be a constant companion, and not a transient guest. And in proportion as we know him intimately, know him as a friend, loving and true, know him as the “chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely,” we shall develop that purity of heart which will enable us to see God; for Christ cannot be comprehended except as we become like him. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 762.5}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 48.**

E. J. Waggoner

As this paper goes to press, blank petitions to both Houses of Congress, asking them not to pass any bill concerning a day of rest and worship, are being circulated. Letters explaining how to use the petitions are being sent with them, so that all who receive them will know just what to do. The friends of true liberty ought not to let Congress legislate on matters of religion, without making a protest. When the petition comes to you act at once. If you do not receive any, write to Pacific Press, Oakland, Cal., or *Review and Herald*, Battle creek, Mich., asking for one. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.1}

The secular papers tell of a man in San Luis Obispo County, this State, who won at a church raffle which was represented as a Jersey cow. The animal proved, however, to be only common stock, and so old as to be almost worthless. The man it seems feels that he was imposed upon, and he is getting considerable sympathy from some quarters. But it is not easy to see that he is entitled to any pity whatever. The man who gambles must expect to be cheated, whether he takes his chances in a dive or in a church. Gambling is no better in the latter place than in the former, and if there is any difference, the gambler who wears the cloak of religion is a more dangerous person than the one who makes no such profession. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.2}

Many newspapers are little more than gossip mongers, and it is but natural that they should be such, since gossip forms the bulk of ordinary conversation, and newspapers are just like the people who make and read them. The London *Star* recently excused itself for printing a bit of baseless scandal, by saying: “No confirmation is at hand; so we give publicity to the rumor, so that if it is false it may be checked before it spreads any further.” That is to say, We think that this thing is not true, and so we circulate it, in order that somebody may have an opportunity of contradicting it. Doubtless many people who like to persuade themselves that their vices are virtues, will be glad to learn of this way of relieving their minds of any possible qualms. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.3}

The real object of the Blair Sunday Bill may be learned from the following remark by W. F. Crafts, before the Illinois Conference, recently in session in Chicago:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.4}

“The post-office is open at the very hour of church; and a man must choose between going to church and going to the post-office to get his mail.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.5}

So a law is designed that will compel that post-office to be closed on Sunday, in order that the people may attend church. Thus is appears that the desired law is wholly in the interest of church attendance on Sunday; and if that law should fail to fill the churches, then the next thing would be a law to compel the indifferent ones to go to church. The National Reformers and their allies are determined that this shall be a “Christian nation.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.6}

The publisher of a Spiritualistic infidel paper writes to us to know how he may find out what is the word of God. He professes to have great difficulty because there are so many translations, differing, he claims, materially. We have to say simply this: The various translations of the Bible are not materially different. The differences are mainly differences of expression, and are no more than would be expected in translation from one language into another by different persons, when several different words expressing different shades of meaning may be used in the rendering of a single word in the original. Then there is one thing more that is essential, and that is that the reader must have a sincere desire to worship God rather than himself; for “if any man do his will, he shall be known of the doctrine.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.7}

We would again call attention to the pamphlet containing the Sabbath-school lessons for the Senior Division for the first six moths of 1889. It is a neat pamphlet of sixty-four pages, and will prove we think, a great convenience to the Sabbath-school scholars. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.8}

One great advantage of having the lessons in pamphlet form is that the student can so readily review previous lessons at any time. In a series of Bible lessons this is of the greatest value, since the study of any one lesson often throws light on some preceeding lesson, making it profitable and even necessary to re-study that lesson. Knowing this, we have made arrangements that we can furnish not only the lesson pamphlet for the first six months of 1889, price 10 cents. but can also furnish, in any quantity, the two pamphlets containing the lessons for 1888. Price for the two, 25 cents. taken together they contain a great amount of light on some most important subjects. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.9}

The *Christian Nation* that was issued the day before Thanksgiving said that for the first time in the history of the day the Catholics would join in the observance of Thanksgiving. It adds: “Official circulars were sent out to this effect, and of course it was not done without the knowledge and consent of the Pope. This event is worth considering. What does it mean?” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.10}

It is indeed worth considering; but few of those who consider it will realize what it means. It means a coming together of Protestant and Catholic. It means that the time is fast approaching when the Catholic Church will be generally considered as the true church of Christ, and the honored mother of the Protestant churches of Christendom. It means, in short, the approach of the time when there will be no Protestant churches, except perhaps in name, and when it will be thought heretical to speak against the Catholic Church, and when the Reformation will be called a burst of fanaticism. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.11}

In a recent Illinois Sunday Convention, Dr. Herrick Johnson, in a speech against Sunday newspapers and special Sunday trains, exclaimed: “Oh, for the breath of the Puritan! Oh, for a little of the Puritan Sabbath!” When it is remembered that in the days of the Puritans everybody was compelled to attend church on Sunday, it will be seen that our conclusion that the Blair Sunday Bill is in reality a bill to increase the attendance at church, is fully warranted. The following items from the laws of the Puritans of Connecticut will show what may be expected when the churches, under the leadership of such men as Dr. Johnson and Dr. Crafts, combine to revive Puritan customs and the Puritan Sabbath:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.12}

“No one shall be a freeman, or give a vote, unless he be converted, and a member in full communion of one of the churches allowed in this dominion.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.13}

“No man shall hold any office who is not sound in the faith and faithful to this dominion; and whoever shall give a vote to such a person shall pay a fine of one pound. For a second offense he shall be disfranchised.”-*Clarke’s History of Intolerance*. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.14}

That is a picture of the final result of the legislation which Senator Blair has introduced; the people who read this will not have to live many years before they see the reality. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.15}

The Rev. W. F. Crafts has received a letter from Cardinal Gibbons indorsing heartily the great petition to Congress for a law forbidding Sunday work in the mail and military service and inter-State commerce. The Cardinal’s position virtually places the entire Catholic Church in the United States on the side of the Sunday law, and the names of all of its communicants will doubtless be added to the six and a quarter millions that have already been affixed to the petitions. The Catholic Church usually succeeds in whatever political scheme it sets itself to carry out; and with even its tacit approval of a measure that is backed by the most popular Protestant churches, and labor organizations, there is certainly great cause for fear that Senator Blair’s bill may soon become laws. Let those lovers of truth and liberty who read this know that now it is high time to awake out of sleep. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.16}

A writer in the *Christian Nation* of November 8, in describing the “native” preachers among the mountains of the South, says that many of them “are the blindest leaders of the blind. I think a majority of them cannot read, and those who can are densely ignorant and totally unfitted to give their people any kind of instruction. They inculcate as doctrines the absurdist superstitions, and their practices are such as bring discredit upon the true type of the gospel minister that “is now inflicted upon not less than two millions of the native-born population in the very heart of our country.” The query forces itself upon us, How are these any worse off than another class who as blindly follow those who are wise above what is written, who in the wisdom of the world know not God? Both cases are pitiable; it is difficult to say which is more so. As a consequence of both, it can truly be said, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” Hosea 4:6. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.17}

“Do you approve of Adventists celebrating Christmas by family gatherings and Christmas trees and giving presents?” is a question which comes to us from one of our readers. For an answer we can do no better than to refer to 1 Corinthians 10:31. If these things can be done to the glory of God they are proper for Christians, but not otherwise. Feasting and gormandizing are not to be indulged in at any time, and they are generally connected with “Family gatherings,” especially upon holiday occasions. If presents are given at all, they should be wisely chosen, so that they shall not minister to depraved appetites, nor to the pride of the natural heart. It would certainly be much better if instead of following the example of the world, and devoting the holiday season to festivities, we should set our hearts the more earnestly to seek God. We should hold ourselves in readiness at all seasons to give to the cause of God and to the needy around us as we are able, and not wait till Christmas, and then spend in useless gifts means which might better be devoted to spreading the truth or to feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.18}

We have received from a physician the following letter, which explains itself:- {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.19}

“EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I saw in your last paper an editorial notice of incestuous marriages authorized by the head of the Romish Church, and that someone in Baltimore denies that such things are done. We had here in Phoenix, Arizona, thirteen years ago, an old Spanish gentleman who was married to his brother’s daughter on a dispensation from the Pope.” {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.20}

It would be interesting to know the consideration for which Pius IX. (for it must have been he who granted the dispensation) sanctioned the abomination referred to by our correspondent. The price paid only a few months since by the Duke of Aosta to Leo XIII. for a similar privilege (?) was, we believe, $20,000. It seems, however, that the amount of gold required to gild sin depends somewhat upon the state of the Papal treasury and the wealth of the party seeking the indulgence. {SITI December 14, 1888, p. 768.21}

**“The Defeat of Justice” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Defeats of justice have become so common nowadays that they excite little or no remark except in extreme instances. Especially is this true in criminal cases, though even in civil suits it is difficult for one who has not an abundance of money to get justice. Why this is so is well told in the following extract from an editorial in the Oakland *Enquirer* of November 28:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 773.1}

“The curse of the legal profession, in respect to the habit of mind fostered in lawyers, is that most of the time the best lawyers are employed against the State instead of for it. The lawyers who are able to make the largest incomes from their practice will not accept moderate salaries paid to public prosecutors, and it is not often that they care to assume the dignities of a judgeship. Thus it comes that many lawyers spend their lives in trying to beat the civil and criminal laws of the Government under which they live, and it is sometimes surprising that they do not despise themselves for the uniform success of their attempts. It is unquestionably true that every accused person has the right to have the best presentation of his defense which the facts admit of, and that defending criminals is reputable business for lawyers, when it is reputably conducted. But twenty or thirty years of this, unmixed with any experience of public advocacy, will certainly narrow and dwarf the mind, if anything can, and stifle all generosity of sentiment. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 773.2}

“In other words, a lawyer is not a good citizen when he subordinates everything to his profession and cares not whether the laws be good or bad so long as he makes his fees. We need only look at the history of San Francisco in California to be satisfied that many of the leading lawyers of the past thirty years have been men of this class. If it is true that the law is a noble profession the nobility of it must be sought in something else than in breaking of public statutes which were drawn for the public good but without sufficient skill, or in fighting legal battles with absolute disregard of the right or wrong, justice or injustice, involved. Cases of this sort are inseparable from the practice of law, but the lawyer who does not rise high enough in sentiment to feel at all times of the laws ought to be executed alike upon the rich and the poor, and the statutes should be made strong enough to withstand the attacks of millionaire criminals, is really no ornament to society. The responsibility of the lawyer for the perfection of the law is of no ordinary kind, because he spends his life in studying it and commenting on it; therefore, if he is not willing to give of his knowledge and his experience for the benefit of the public, the loss is a very sensible one.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 773.3}

The design of the law, and of courts of law, is to guarantee to every man his rights, to protect life, person, and property, and it ought to be the purpose of every member of every court to carry out fully the spirit of a law; but such is seldom the ruling principle in the legal breast. Lawyers undertake cases not simply with the determination that their clients shall have their rights, but that they shall have all the advantage which can possibly be gained for them by whatever means. The legal profession needs renovation, but there is small hope that it will ever be better than it is now. So long as Mammon holds sway in the hearts of men, lawyers will work, not for right and justice, but for money, for place, and for power. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 773.4}

**“How to Become New Men” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

The following is from one of Talmage’s sermons, and is one of the truest things he ever said. Those who will read the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah will find the divine authority for the statements here made:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 773.5}

“O ye overweighted, successful business men, whether this sermon reach your car or your eye, let me say that if you are prostrate with anxieties about keeping or investing these tremendous fortunes, I can tell you how you can do more to get your health back, and your spirits raised from, than by drinking gallons of bad-tasting water at Saratoga, Hamburg, or Carlsbad,-give to God and humanity the Bible, and ten per cent. of all your income, and it will make a new man of you, and from restless walking of the floor at night you shall have eight hours, sleep without the help of bromide or potassium; and from no appetite you will hardly be able to wait for your regular meals, and your wan cheeks will fill up; and when you die the blessings of those who but for you would have perished, will bloom all over your grave with violets if it be spring, or gladiolas if it be autumn.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 773.6}

**“A Sign of the Times” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Christian Statesman* of November 29 has an article copied from the *Christian Intelligencer*, about the amount of business done by photographers on Sunday. Following are a few paragraphs from it, which will serve to show the drift of sentiment in regard to such labor:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.1}

“It is hardly probable that the Christian people of this city are aware of the extent to which the Sabbath is violated by the photographers. Many of the principal galleries are filled with waiting patrons, and their largest business is done on the Sabbath.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.2}

“The famous galleries, although not exactly open to the public, are ready to make appointments, and prefer that day to execute the pictures of the popular actors, singers, etc.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.3}

“And most of the small places, after passing a dull week, expect to make up on the Sunday business enough to give them a profit over the week’s expenses.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.4}

“There is a wholesome law against this transacting business on the holy day, but it is not enforced. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.5}

“A few years ago an attempt was made to close up the violators of the Sabbath, but it was not successful, and several of the prominent men in that effort, seeing no remedy, now keep open, and find their purses better filled, their bank account much larger, and their credit much better with the stock dealer. Now in view of this truthful statement, what is the duty of the Christian public in this matter?” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.6}

The article carries with it its own answer to the last question, that is from the standpoint of the *Statesman* and the *Intelligencer*. The plainly implied demand is that such business should be stopped by law. And this indicates to what lengths the instigators of the Sunday-law movement will go, when they have secured the legislation which they want, and have the power in their hands. It shows that a system of *espionage* will be inaugurated, and that nobody’s privacy will be sacred from the prying intrusion of the minions of such an iniquitous law. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.7}

There is no business that is conducted with more quietness than the business of photography. Nothing is less calculated to disturb public worship or private devotion. Even a monk in his cloister could not be disturbed by the business of a photographer next door if he were not informed of its proximity. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.8}

When the photographer may be arrested for quietly conducting his work in an upper room on Sunday, then no person will be exempt. Some zealous individual, anxious for political preferment, will find out that the merchant is in his private office on Sunday, looking over his ledger, and forthwith the merchant will be arrested. The lady who takes in sewing may be arrested for making button-holes, or fitting a garment in her back parlor on Sunday. The literary man who writes for hire may be arrested for quietly working at his desk on Sunday. In short, from such a wholesale stoppage of Sunday work as is desired by the *Statesman*, the *Intelligencer*, and all who may be classed as National Reformers, it will be but a step to the arresting of every citizen who is found away from church on Sunday, unless detained by sickness. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.9}

That this is not an exaggerated conclusion is evident from the statement of Dr. Herrick Johnson, that he longed for the breath of the Puritan, for the Puritan Sabbath, and this is just what was done in the days of the Covenanters and Puritans. Robert Wodrow, a Scotch ecclesiastical historian, of whom it is said that his “veracity was above suspicion,” and of his writings, that “no historical facts are better ascertained than the accounts... to be found in Wodrow,” makes the following statement concerning the methods used to secure attendance at church:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.10}

“It is thocht expedient that ane Baillie with tua of the session pas throw the towne everie Sabbath day, and nott sic as they find absent fra the sermons ather afoir or efter none; and for that effect that they pas and *scrsche sic houses as they think maist meit.*”—*Selections from the Records of the Kirk Session, Presbytery, and Synod of Aberden* . {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.11}

In modern English this is as follows:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.12}

“It is thought expedient that any bailiff with two of the session pass through the town every Sabbath day, and note such as they find absent from the sermons either before or after noon; and for that effect that they pass and search such houses as they think most meet.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.13}

In his “Collections” he says: “The session allows the searchers to go into houses, and apprehend absents from the kirk.” Now when one of the great cries for a Sunday law is because people do not go to church, and when the only ground for stopping a photographer from working in the seclusion of his own room, could be that he was staying from church and at least inviting others to do so, the conclusion is inevitable that when the clamorers for a Sunday law get what they want, they will make no scruple of going into any house where they have reason to suspect that anybody is working on Sunday, and arresting the occupants. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.14}

Are we not warranted in saying that the liberties of the American people are in danger? Is it not high time that people were awakening to the alarming growth of the religious legislation evil? Who will protest against the degeneracy of Protestantism? W. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.15}

**“Him Only Shalt Thou Serve” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

A brother writing from Nebraska wishes to know it, in case a law were made compelling everybody to keep Sunday, it would be wrong for one who has kept the Sabbath day according to the commandment, to rest upon Sunday also. He asks if the fourth commandment obliges us to work six days in the week, as well as to rest on the Sabbath. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.16}

This is a question that is frequently asked, and may very easily be answered. In the first place, the fourth commandment does not oblige us to work six entire days of every week. The idea of the commandment is, that we shall do all of our work in the six days which are given for that purpose, and that the seventh must be kept sacred. In the six days we may work; in the seventh day we may not work. This is God’s order; and no earthly power has any right to command us to rest on any of the six days which God has given us for labor, any more than it has to command us to work on the day which God has made sacred to himself. But while the statement that in the seventh day we shall not work, prohibits us from doing any secular work on that day, the statement that in the six days we shall do all our own work, does not compel us to work every minute of those six days. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.17}

Must we then conclude that it would be all right for us to rest upon the first day if we were commanded by the Government to do so, provided we had previously rested upon the Sabbath? By no means. We could not in that way keep the Sabbath “according to the commandment;” for the commandment recognizes no authority to appoint rest days but Jehovah himself. The granting to us of six days in which to work, is sufficient proof that no earthly power has any right to appoint a rest day. Now if we, in compliance with the command of any earthly power, do rest upon any of the six working days, we recognize that power as of equal authority with God; and that would nullify our keeping of the seventh day, by showing that we did not do it as an act of worship to the only God. In short, our act would show a divided allegiance, fear, and not love, being at the bottom of it. It would show that we kept the seventh day for the same reason that we kept the first, namely, to escape the penalty pronounced upon the violators. Such service God cannot accept. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.18}

Sunday as a religious institution is a child of the Papacy-the badge of authority of that power. Whoever having the fourth commandment before him, and understanding and acknowledging its claims, should keep the first day in deference to the command of any earthly power, would be, in the plainest manner possible, showing deference to the Papacy, and would be far more culpable than the one who should keep the day supposing it to be the true Sabbath. The fact that he had previously rested on the seventh day, would only make his culpability the greater, by showing that he was deliberately, on account of slavish fear, placing the decrees of men on a level with the commandment of God. Such a time-serving policy, while it might secure the person freedom from molestation for a time, would be found to be most disastrous in the end; for “he that findeth his life shall lose it.” W. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.19}

**“Subjection to the Powers that Be” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” Romans 13:1, 2. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.20}

This text of Scripture has been the cause of a great deal of controversy concerning the scope of civil governments, and the relations which Christians should sustain to them. There are a great many people who take the extreme view that whatever civil governments enact should be scrupulously obeyed, no matter how much it may conflict with the will of God, as revealed in the Bible. They seem to imagine that God has delegated all power to men, and that he waives to the claims of men his right to govern in matters of morals. They virtually say that the inspired command to be subject to the higher powers absolves people from direct allegiance to their Creator. The very statement of the case should be enough to show anybody the absurdity of such a view. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.21}

The thirteenth chapter of Romans affords, in itself, ample proof that the powers that be are ordained of God only in matters that pertain to the outward peace of society. But we wish to bring a few other scriptures to bear, to show just how we are to be subject to earthly powers, and at the same time be subject to the highest power of all. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.22}

The seventh verse of the same chapter says: “Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.” Render “honor to whom honor” is due, is a part of this command. Now it is beyond question that honor is due to God, for the Lord himself says that he will honor only those who honor him. 1 Samuel 2:30. And that this tribute and honor which are due to God are entirely different from those which are due to earthly governments, is evident from the words of Christ to the Pharisees, which are exactly parallel with those of Paul to the Romans: “Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s; and unto God the things which are God’s.” Matthew 22:21. Thus we see that while we are to be subject to the earthly powers, that subjection must in nowise conflict with our subjection to God. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.23}

That inspiration does not teach that men are in duty bound to obey every edict of earthly powers, but that they are to disobey every enactment which conflicts with the law of God, is very plain. Take the case of the three Hebrew children at the court of Nebuchadnezzar. They were as truly bound to be subject to him as ever any men were to an earthly ruler, for Nebuchadnezzar was king by God’s own appointment (Jeremiah 27:4-7), and they had by the same power been placed under him. Yet when the king commanded them to worship an image which he had set up, they absolutely refused to do anything of the kind. For their stubbornness, as the king doubtless thought it, they were cast into a fiery furnace; yet God, who commands us to be subject to the powers that be, showed his approval of their course in the most marked manner. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.24}

Take the case of Daniel in the court of Darius. That king made a decree that for thirty days no man should make a request of any god or man except himself, under penalty of being cast into a den of lions. But Daniel paid no manner of attention to the decree. When he knew that the writing was signed, “he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.” Daniel 6:10. Like his three fellows, he made no secret of his disobedience to the king’s order. Yet the same God who commands us to be subject to the powers that be, showed his approval of Daniel’s course, by delivering him from the lions, and honoring him before the whole empire. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 774.25}

The apostles afford another case in point. An express injunction was laid upon them by the Jewish Sanhedrim “not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.” Acts 4:17, 18. The apostles, however, refused to keep silence, saying, “We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (verse 20), and they went right on teaching as though the rulers had said nothing. When they were again brought before the council, and reminded of the injunction which had been laid upon them, they boldly replied, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29. All these cases, and especially this last, show that the command to be subject to the powers that he does not mean that we should obey them when obedience to them involves disobedience to God. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.1}

Now the question arises, Were these men subject to the Governments under which they lived? Can men be subject to the powers that be, and yet not obey them in every particular, no matter what they command? We answer that men can be subject to the powers that be, and still disobey them when their decrees conflict with the laws of God; and the record shows most clearly that Daniel and his fellows, and the apostles, were subject to the powers that existed in their time. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.2}

A passage from the writings of one of the men who refused to obey men when to do so involved disloyalty to God, will make this matter clear. We quote from 1 Peter 2:17-29:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.3}

“Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.4}

The command to “honor the king” shows this to be a parallel passage to Romans 13:1, 2. Here, as there, we are exhorted to be subject to rulers, even though they be not good. But that this does not mean that we should in so doing disobey God, is evident from verse 19: “For this is thank-worthy if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.” The fact that he is called upon to suffer wrongfully, and that he is buffeted because he does well, shows that his doing right has been in direct opposition to the commands of his master. He suffers “for conscience toward God.” That is, his conscience will not allow him to disobey God’s commandment in obedience to the powers that be, and so he patiently suffers for it. And although he cannot obey the master’s command, his patient acceptance of the threatened punishment shows his subjection to the power. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.5}

So we see that being subject to the powers that be means simply that we are to obey them when their commands are right, and to disobey them when they conflict with those of God, and meekly to take the consequences. This is just what Daniel and his fellows and the apostles did. They did not resist, but they did not obey an unrighteous commandment. Now turn again to Romans 13, verse 2 and 5, and you will see that is just what is taught. We quote:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.6}

“Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.7}

The Bible everywhere teaches respect for authority. Anarchists can find no warrant in the Bible for any of their contempt for authority. Rebellion against authority is not countenanced under any circumstances. Every soul must be subject to the powers that be, and that subjection consists in willing, prompt obedience to all their laws when they do not require disregard of God’s law, and as willing an acceptance of the penalty for disobeying laws that do contravene the laws of God. An example of this is found in the early Christians, who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Hebrews 10:34. Where there cannot be obedience, there must not be resistance. David would not lift his hand against the king of Israel, even though that king was most unjustly seeking his life; Paul would not knowingly speak ill of the high priest, although that priest was a wicked hypocrite. He counseled the Christians to be subject to the powers that were, even while he was daily violating the laws of the most wicked ruler; and he showed his subjection to a power which was despicable because of its moral rottenness, by willingly yielding up his life as the price of his necessary disobedience. W. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.8}

**“The Essence of Spiritualism” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Quite a stir has been made over the publication of the fact that the poet Tennyson is a Spiritualist. In a letter which he recently wrote to a friend, in which he shows that he is his own medium, he said:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.9}

“I have never had any revelations through anesthetics, but a kind of waking trance (this for lack of a better name) I have frequently had, quite up from boyhood, when I have been all alone. This has often come upon me through repeating my own name to myself, till all at once, as it were, out of the intensity of the consciousness of individuality, the individuality itself seemed to dissolve, and fade away into boundless being, and this not a confused state, but the clearest of the clearest, the sweetest of the sweetest, utterly beyond words, where death was an almost laughable impossibility, the loss of personality (if so it were) seeming no extinction, but the only true life.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.10}

This, which must surely be called the sublimity of egotism, is the very essence of Spiritualism. It is the beginning and end of the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul, for that doctrine begins and ends with self. It was by causing Eve to think of herself, and instilling into her mind an exaggerated sense of her own importance, that Satan secured her fall. The doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul grows out of the idea so natural to man, that he is of such transcendent importance that God could not get along without him; and the next step to that is the idea that man himself is a god. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.11}

Is it not strange that professed Christians will cling to a doctrine which makes man everything, and ignores Christ as the Author of life? And who cannot see that a doctrine which make it unnecessary to come to Christ for life, must necessarily tend to immorality, since it depreciates, and causes men to slight, the only source of purity? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.12}

**“Mammon of Unrighteousness” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

A correspondent wishes an explanation of Luke 16:9, which reads, “And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.13}

This text presents the lesson that our Saviour would have us learn from the preceding parable, that just as the unjust steward had used the riches of this world to provide for himself a home in old age among those he had helped, so the children of light should use the riches of this world to provide for themselves everlasting habitations. It is parallel to Matthew 5:20: “But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” Jesus does not mean that we can purchase Heaven by anything we can do; the only price acceptable is that paid by our Lord Jesus Christ. But the way we use the riches of this world is the evidence of the work wrought within. Often the Lord accepts an individual who has a covetous nature, but who does not know it until subsequent trials reveal it. The sure way for him to then overcome is to use in the cause of God the riches he has gathered, to lay up treasure in Heaven, to make friends of God, Christ, and the angels, and thus crucify and overcome his covetous nature, making sure his reception into everlasting habitations. Neither are we to say, as many thoughtlessly do, “The riches of the universe belong to God, he does not need any means,” and so do nothing. It is true, God does not need our means, but he demands them in order to develop within us that unselfish love which will fit us to dwell in the everlasting habitations. We must all learn the lesson, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Acts 20:35. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.14}

**“The Promise to Abraham” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

A reader of the SIGNS asks: “Why was it that two and a half tribes of the children of Israel remained on the east side of Jordan? I understand that Canaan was typical of our heavenly rest; why then did some remain outside of that land?” The questioner’s supposition evidently is that the territory to the east of the Jordan was not a part of the promised land, but that this is a mistake is evident from Joshua 1:4: “From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.” But aside from this scripture we know that not only the land of Canaan proper, but also the whole earth, was promised to Abraham and to his seed. See Romans 4:13. And had Abraham’s descendants been faithful to God, they would long ere this have subdued all nations and filled the earth. The name Canaan no more limited the promise to the valley of the Jordan-from which the name was derived-than did the necessarily short range of human vision limit the promise to just what Abraham could see, when the Lord said unto him: “Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 775.15}

**“The Great Mistake of Protestantism” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Rev. H. H. Hinman has an article in a recent number of the Christian sinners are, in which he writes thus concerning Christmas:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 776.1}

“If we may adopt religious institutions of mere human devising, and arbitrarily appoint days for their celebration, there is no limit to what man may do in creating religious institutions. There is quite as much reason for the adoration of her who was the most blessed among women, as for the unauthorized celebration of the birth of her son. The great mistake of the Papacy has been the substitution of human inventions, of which Christmas is manifestly a sample. If we admit these interpolations in religion, we cannot stop short of entire conformity to all that is laid upon us. We must either cease our protest against the worship of the bread and wine in the mass, and to the confessional, or stop doing religious duties that have no higher authority than man. The road leads to Rome, and there is no stopping-place but at the end. We shall find enough to do in keeping divinely-appointed institutions in their true spirit, without turning aside to the commandments of men.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 776.2}

Whatever may be the merits or demerits of Christmas as a mere human holiday, it certainly has no just claims as a religious institution. Few comparatively are so ignorant as to suppose that it is indeed the anniversary of the birth of our Lord; and if it were, there is certainly no divine warrant for its observance. But in that respect it does not stand alone; Sunday keeping is equally without divine precept; and yet in the paragraph following the one quoted, Mr. Hinman calls that day “the Christian Sabbath.” Certainly if the practice of celebrating Christmas is reprehensible (and we do not say that it is not), Sunday keeping is doubly so, for whereas Christmas antagonizes no divine institution, Sunday stands opposed to the Sabbath of Lord, the day commanded in the fourth precept of the decalogue. True it is that the great mistake, yea, the great sin, “of the Papacy has been the substitution of human inventions” for the divinely-appointed institutions of the gospel; and it is no less true that the great mistake of Protestantism has been in adopting these substitutes, thus making void the commandments of God by Papal traditions. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 776.3}

**“Sunday Harvesting” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

One of the Presbyterian synods of Scotland has recently been discussing the matter of Sunday observance. That which gave rise to the discussion was the fact that members of that church had been engaged in Sunday harvesting. Such work was condemned by the chairman of the Committee of Sabbath Observance, for the reason that “the circumstances of the present season did not warrant Sunday harvesting.” This language seems to convey the idea that in a less favorable season than the one just past, Sunday work would be justifiable; and according to the London *Christian World*, such seems to have been the view taken by the synod. This, to say the least, is a strange position for Scotch Presbyterians to take. Presbyterians universally profess to regard Sunday as the Sabbath, and to rest its observance upon the fourth commandment; how, then, can they make exceptions not made in that commandment, or, indeed, anywhere else in all the Scriptures? Of the Sabbath, the fourth commandment says: “In it thou shalt not do any work;” not even in harvest, for in Exodus 34:21 we read, “in earing [sowing] time and in harvest thou shalt rest.” Of course these texts have not the slightest application to Sunday, but the Presbyterians, and notably the Scotch Presbyterians, teach that they have, though down in their inmost souls they know that Sunday is not the Sabbath; hence the admission that under some circumstances harvesting may be done upon that day. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 776.4}

**“A New Religion Wanted” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Something of a sensation has been made by the Rev. Heber Newton, pastor of All Souls’ Episcopal Church, New York, who declared in a recent sermon that the need of the present age is a new religion. He said that Christianity in its present form does not satisfy the present progressive spiritual aspirations of humanity. For our part we can heartily agree with Mr. Newton. We think he is doubly right. In the first place the aspirations of humanity in general can be satisfied only by a fashion-plate, a fancy ball or party, a base-ball game, or a slogging match; and even “Christianity in its present form” cannot satisfy all these longings. And in the second place “Christianity in its present form” is so far removed from primitive Christianity that if the Christianity of Christ and his apostles were taught and lived out, it would be indeed a new religion. That is what the present age needs. Such Christianity will satisfy all the real needs of humanity. Says Christ, “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.” Matthew 11:28, 29. God is able to make all grace abound, and to do “exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think.” He is able to satisfy the highest aspirations of the human heart. But the thoughts and longings of the mass of mankind are too low, and too nearly “only evil continually,” to be satisfied by the pure gospel of Christ. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 776.5}

**“No Boasting” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

The true soldier of Christ, be he ever so faithful, will never feel to boast of his attainments of character or holiness of life. As he gets nearer Jesus, he comprehends more of the infinite perfection of the Master, and sees less to be praised in himself. He may not have been guilty of conscious sin during a certain period, yet when he reviews that period side by side with the life of the great Example, how imperfect it seems. Like Daniel he feels that his comeliness is turned into corruption. Daniel 10:8. The infirmities of our fallen natures are manifested at almost every step, and the tendencies of sinful flesh and confirmed habits have, in unguarded moments, often unconsciously marred the work we were doing for the Master. God accepts the work because it is wrought in love, through grace, by a heart which is set to do the whole will of God; but he does not condone our faults. These we are to “mortify,” “crucify,” “keep under,” “put off.” The graces are to “increase,” the love to “abound more and more.” There will ever be growth till imperfection reaches perfection, till the babe in Christ reaches the fully-developed man. Then with Paul let the child of God say, “Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.1}

**“What More Can Be Asked?” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Christian Nation* of December 5 reports that “the committee appointed at the last synod [of the Reformed Presbyterians] to circulate petitions seeking a Christian Amendment to the Constitution, to be signed by those who refuse to accept it in its present form, sent out blank forms to all the congregations of the church during the month of August.” They say that “those who did not on November 6 send men to swear to the Constitution should now take opportunity of recording their vows for the amendment.” What ails the Constitution now? It grants to all men the privilege of living or refusing to live Christians. So does Christianity. “Whosoever will” may come. Revelation 22:17. The Constitution does not *compel* men to accept any religion. Neither did Christ. “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we *persuade* men.” 2 Corinthians 5:11. What more can be asked? He who asks for that which will discriminate between men, seeks to build up tyranny and oppression. His object is wholly selfish; and selfishness has not part in the religion of Christ. The so-called Christian Amendment to the Constitution will unjustly discriminate between individuals whose only difference before the amended Constitution will be their religious belief or non-belief. Therefore it is not Christian; it is *anti* christian. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.2}

**“No Practical Difference” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

A recent proposal and the French Chamber of Deputies, to abolish the embassy to the Vatican, was rejected by a vote of 307 to 217. On that occasion Prince Goblet made the following speech, for which he was applauded:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.1}

“As long as we live under the regime of the concordat, it is necessary to maintain relations with the Vatican for the training of the clergy and the appointment of bishops and cardinals. The importance of our protectorate in Eastern countries, also, requires the maintenance of friendly relations with the Vatican. Rival powers dispute our protectorate. The friendship of the Pope is, therefore, precious, the Pope already has his bitternesses. Is it for us to increase them? It has been said recently that the Pope could no longer count upon any country but France. That does not mean that France will intervene to restore his temporal power; but the more the Pope is deprived of that power the more France ought to honor him by curtailing nothing of her respect for the high authority he represents.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.2}

The present Pope may be trusted to make himself indispensable to the Governments of Europe. It matters little whether he has temporal power or not, so long as he practically controls the movements of the great powers. In this connection it may be noted that the Pope has recently received a letter from the Czar, accepting the Vatican’s proposals, and promising to restore diplomatic relations between the Russian government and the Vatican at an early date. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.3}

**“The Commentary. Shrinking from Duty” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

***OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.*  
(Lesson, Sabbath, Jan. 5.)**

1. Under what circumstances did the Lord appear to Moses at Horeb? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.1}

“And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.” Exodus 3:4-6. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.2}

2. For what purpose did the Lord appear to him? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.3}

“And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me; and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.” Verses 7-10. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.4}

3. By what name did the Lord say he would be known? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.5}

“And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you; this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.” Verses 13-15. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.6}

4. What is the significance of this name?-*The One who is; the self-existence and eternal One*. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.7}

5. What similar terms do we find in the New Testament? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.8}

“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne.” Revelation 1:4. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.9}

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.” Hebrews 13:8. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.10}

6. What sign was given to Moses, by which the Israelites might know that the Lord had appeared to him? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 777.11}

“And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice; for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee. And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand; that they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.” Exodus 4:1-5. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.1}

7. What additional sign was given? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.2}

“And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.” Verses 6, 7. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.3}

8. What further sign was Moses to give in case the Israelites should not believe the first two? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.4}

“And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land; and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.” Verse 8. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.5}

9. What excuse did Moses then make? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.6}

“And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.” Verse 10. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.7}

10. What rebuke and encouragement did the Lord give him? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.8}

“And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man’s mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.” Verses 11, 12. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.9}

11. What reply did Moses make? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.10}

“And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.” Verse 13. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.11}

12. With what did Moses thus indirectly charge God? See note. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.12}

13. How did the Lord regard this? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.13}

“And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses.” Verse 14, first clause. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.14}

14. What further encouragement did he give Moses? {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.15}

“And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee; and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth; and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people; and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.” Verses 14-16. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.16}

15. What practical lesson may we learn from this occurrence? See note. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.17}

**NOTES**

When Moses said to the Lord, “Send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou shouldst send,” he indirectly charged God with not knowing who he ought to send. If the Lord had not seen that Moses was the best man for the place, he would not have selected him. While God does not want a man to run when he has not been sent (see Jeremiah 23:2), he does want a man to go when he sends him. If God indicates that he wants a man to do a certain work, that is sufficient evidence that he will sustain him in that work. It is a terrible thing to refuse to obey the Lord. To beg off from labor to which one has been appointed, is not always humility. It may be an evidence of pride or stubbornness. This case under consideration may naturally call to the minds of many the case of Jonah, although Jonah was not like Moses except in that he did not want to do what the Lord wanted him to do. The motives of the two men were different. The teacher, however, who exhausts the lesson before the allotted time has expired, will do well to call attention to the case of Jonah, and of others that come to his mind, as different phases of this shrinking from duty. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.18}

Very often people who plead inability to do a certain work in the church or Sabbath-school, to which they are called, think that their refusal is an evidence of their humility, when, in fact, it is an evidence of nothing but pride. They fear that if they should take hold of it, they might make mistakes, and that people might not think so much of them in consequence. And so, in order to avoid possible criticism by men, they are content to be drones, and to risk the displeasure of God. That is one of the worst kinds of pride. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 778.19}

**“Believe God’s Promises” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

We should believe God. All that he has said he will make good. He will reproduce his words in facts. His great promises are fulfilled with as much ease as the last ones. He can make an ocean as readily as a dew-drop. He can give you a large blessing as readily as a small one; only give him room in your faith. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 779.1}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

By comparing the reports concerning the Sunday-law petition to Congress, it will be seen that the number of petitioners has suddenly jumped from six million to fourteen million. This is evidently due to the letter of Cardinal Gibbons to Mr. Craft endorsing the movement. It is easy work securing signers to a petition when eight million names can be added by a stroke of the pen. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.1}

The theological faculty of the University Giessen has conferred on Prince Bismarck the title of Doctor of Divinity! Just what moved them to do this we do not know, but we imagine that it was because they are tinctured with the National Reform idea that men may go up to the polls to worship God. When politics and religion are one, we can see no incongruity in making every statesman a Doctor of Divinity. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.2}

Two hundred and twelve thousand copies of the October *Sentinel* extra, besides the regular issue, were printed and sent out, and already a good effect of that movement can be seen. The January number ought to have fully as wide a circulation, and to insure this the publishers offer to furnish them to Tract Societies at the rate of $10 per thousand copies, in lots of not less than 5,000. Extra plates will be made, so that orders can be filled at any time. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.3}

The *Union Signal* has this to say of the proposed Sunday law: “Labor unions are now united with the churches in demanding such legislation. Our wheelbarrow Government never does anything without pushing; but with the churches pushing with all their might at one handle of the wheel barrow, and the Labor unions doing the same at the other, it must move and carry its load-Sunday observance-along with it.” When Pilate and Herod were made friends, Christ had to be crucified. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.4}

In the *Chronicle’s* report of the San Francisco Methodist Preachers’ Meeting, last Monday, we find the following item:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.5}

“Mr. Van Blarcom urged the importance of work for securing a Sunday law from the coming Legislature. Dr. Dwinelle said the only hope of getting one was in a union with the Catholics for the object. He thought they would unite to that end. Others expressed the same opinion.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.6}

Of course they will unite to that end. But let them be assured that the Catholic Church never makes any alliance except to its own advantage. And we would like to have these ministers consider whether they can unite with Catholics and still continue to be Protestants. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.7}

A Washington dispatch of the 11th inst. mentions the opening of the National Sunday Convention in that city, and says:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.8}

“A feature of the decorations was festoons of petitions to Congress, from every part of the country, urging the passage of the Sunday Rest Bill introduced last session. The petitions were attached to a seemingly endless broad scarlet ribbon, which reached several times around and across the great auditorium of the church. They contained, approximately, 6,000,000 names.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.9}

That to which we wish to call special attention is the color of the ribbon on which these Sunday-law petitions were hung. It was a “seemingly endless broad *scarlet* ribbon.” Inasmuch as the Sunday institution is the child of the woman arrayed in “purple and scarlet color,” which sat upon the “scarlet-colored beast” (see Revelation 17:3-6), and has shed the blood of so many saints, it is highly fitting that that color should be prominent in connection with the Sunday-law petitions. We are glad that our National Reform friends have an eye to the fitness of things. They choose to array themselves with the trappings of the beast, they have the privilege; but we will have nothing to do with this mark. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.10}

Another evidence, or rather admission, that all Sunday legislation is religious legislation, is found in the remarks of Dr. Goodwin, of Chicago, in presenting to the ministers’ meeting the resolutions prepared by Dr. Herrick Johnson in regard to Sunday newspapers and Sunday observance. The Doctor said that “to strike at the Christian Sabbath is to strike at the very corner-stone of all our Christian institutions.” Therefore a law in favor of Sunday, the so-called Christian Sabbath, is a law in favor of the Christian religion; and since no open law breaker can hope to be elected to public office, it follows that the enactment of Sunday laws is squarely opposed to that part of the Constitution of the United States which says that no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.11}

The January number of the *American Sentinel* promises to be one of the best ever issued. From present prospects we may say that we don’t know how it could very well be any better than it will be, unless there were more of it. And it seems that by some means the people are anticipating what it will be, for already the publishers have received, by telegraph, orders for many thousand extra copies. Perhaps others can say that the publishers would be very willing to print two hundred thousand of the January number. If twice as many are ordered, they will not complain. Among the interesting live matter that the January *Sentinel* will contain, will be reports of the Illinois “Sabbath Association” meeting in Chicago, and of the National Convention in Washington, December 11-13. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.12}

It is said that “a sensation has been caused by the refusal of the Pope to bless a lot of metals and reliquaries sent to Rome by an Irish priest, who intended them for distribution in Ireland. The Pope sternly says: ‘I cannot bless them. The people of Ireland are disobedient. They seem to prefer the gospel of Dillon and O’Brien to the gospel of Jesus Christ.’” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.13}

It remains to be seen whether the people of Ireland can survive this cruel blow. Possibly they may manage to get along without the silly baubles over which the Pope refused to mumble a blasphemous jargon, miscalled a blessing. Probably the blow will fall most heavily upon the unfortunate priest, who no doubt expected to reap a golden harvest from the sale of his medals and reliquaries. Certain is that the poor people of Ireland have lost nothing but the withholding of the Papal benediction. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.14}

The *Independent* of November 29 had the following note:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.15}

“It is significant that the first article in this our Thanksgiving number is a recognition by the presiding Cardinal Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church in America, of the value of the day of thanksgiving and praise appointed by the President of the United States. Our Catholic fellow-citizens have been slow to adopt this New England institution, but now the same Cardinal Gibbons has directed it to be observed in the churches under his authority. So we agree in bidding all our people, Protestants and Catholics, now for the first time, to celebrate this national holiday.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.16}

Indeed it is significant, and significant of far more than the *Independent* imagines. It is significant of the rapidity with which Catholicism and professed Protestantism are coming together. Last spring the majority of Protestant churches and many large cities observed “holy week,” in accordance with Catholic customs; and it is but a slight return for their obsequiousness for the Catholics to observe Thanksgiving-day, in accordance with Protestant custom, especially since the observance consists chiefly in gormandizing. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.17}

The Chicago *Advance* of December 6, in an article on the reasons why fewer men than women attend church, shows the fallacy of the explanation that men are too tired to attend church on Sunday, by saying that “laboring men’s organizations are quite commonly holding their meetings on Sunday. They do not seem to be too tired for that.” And then it continues:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.18}

“It is also plain that the men who do not come to churches include that constantly increasing class who are secularizing Sunday, and making it another work-day. Nothing can be more clear than the fact that the only way to have Sunday a rest day is to keep it a religious day.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.19}

And so, “by the same token,” it appears that every law for the observance of Sunday is a law in favor of religion; and therefore to make laws compelling people to keep Sunday is to make laws to compel them to be religious, and it should need no argument to convince anybody who has ever read the Bible that such a proceeding is directly opposed to the Spirit of Christ and the gospel. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.20}

The San Francisco County Sunday-school Association was organized last week, and a brief report in the *Chronicle* reveals the fact that there is at least one man in San Francisco who has a level head. The report says:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.21}

“Mrs. Gray, of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, one of the society to take hold of a petition to the Legislature urging it to pass a Sunday law, and a law prohibiting the sale of tobacco to children; but no action was taken in the matter, Chairman Anthony stating that he had no confidence in the average legislator doing anything to promote godliness.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.22}

If Mr. Anthony had only said that he had no confidence in any legislator doing anything in his official capacity to promote godliness, he would have been exactly right. Godliness is obedience to God, and not to man. Human laws concerning religion can never make man godly, nor can they have any tendency in that direction; but if they are severe enough, and are rigidly enforced, they can make first-class hypocrites. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.23}

We heartily indorse the following from the *Sunday School Times*, in answer to the question if the Jews in compassing the city of Jericho seven days did not thereby violate the Sabbath:- {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.24}

“The record stands that they compassed the city six days, and that on the seventh day they compassed it seven times. This leaves no room for questioning that one of those seven days was the Sabbath. The rabbinical tradition is that the marching began on the first day of the week, and that therefore the last day of the siege was the Sabbath. However this may be, there is nothing in the record that is inconsistent with the true observance of the Sabbath by the Israelites on every one of the seven days. Were they doing their own work on those days? By no means. They were simply following the ark of the Lord; and that is good business for any believer on the Sabbath, or on any other day of the week. The work of destruction in Jericho did not, probably, begin until sundown of the seventh day. In fact, the siege of Jericho was simply a protracted meeting of seven days, with extra services on the last day of the week.” {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.25}

That last sentence has the flavor of originality. {SITI December 21, 1888, p. 784.26}

**“Truth and Its Importance” The Signs of the Times, 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

When Jesus stood before Pilate, accused as a malefactor, he vindicated his character by these simple words: “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” John 18:37. Pilate, unconscious of the fact that Jesus had already given the substance of the best definition of truth, asked, “What is truth?” and immediately went out. His question, and the fact that he did not seem to expect an answer, would indicate that he did not believe in the existence of such a thing as truth. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.1}

There have always been, and are still, many, many people in the same condition as Pilate. There are many who affect to disbelieve in the existence of truth and goodness. The reason for this is plain. Their own hearts are corrupt, and they have naturally sought the association of those of like character, until they know nothing of truth. The licentious man, who has always associated with men and women of low and depraved tastes, does not believe that there is such a thing as virtue. The knave thinks all men can be bought, providing the price is fixed high enough. Pharaoh, who knew nothing by experience of real worship directed to a God who could discern the motives, did not believe that there existed any such being. Only the man whose heart is pure, or who has longings for purity of soul, can know and appreciate the truth; for it is only the man who will do God’s will who shall know of the doctrine. John 7:17. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.2}

When Jesus said that he came into the world to bear witness of the truth, and that everyone that is of the truth would hear his voice, he expressed in another form what he had already told his disciples: “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” John 14:6. He is the one that is holy and true, “the faithful and true witness.” One of the definitions of truth is, “Exact accordance with that which is, or has been, or shall be.” This exactly agrees with what is revealed of Jesus. He is “the same yesterday, and today, and forever,” Jehovah, “the one which is, and which was, and which is to come.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.3}

In his prayer for the disciples Jesus told what truth is, and what it will do. Said he: “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” John 17:17. But Jesus is the Word of God, the one through whom alone the character, and attributes, and power of God are made known to men. The law of God, the ten commandments, is declared to be the truth, as the psalmist says: “Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth;” and, “Thou art near, O Lord; and all thy commandments are truth.” Psalm 119:142, 151. These commandments were spoken by the voice of God upon Mount Sinai, and “he added no more,” so that they are, in an eminent degree, the truthful word of which Christ spoke in his prayer, yet it was the voice of the Son of God, the divine Word, who uttered them, so that the commandments of God are inseparably connected with our Lord Jesus Christ. They proceeded from him, being an expression of his own righteousness. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.4}

That this is so is shown still farther by the words of the prophet concerning Christ: “The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honorable.” Isaiah 42:21. There cannot be the slightest doubt that this chapter is a prophecy of the Messiah, and the law is expressly declared to be his righteousness. So when the prophet David spoke by inspiration in Christ’s stead, he said: “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” Now take these facts, together with Christ’s words, “Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice,” and we have the most positive evidence that the keeping of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are inseparably connected. No one can keep the commandments without faith in Jesus, and no one ever has real faith in Jesus except as he is driven to it by the terms of the violated law, and by a sincere desire to have the righteousness of the law fulfilled in him. The righteousness which is “through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Philippians 3:9), is the only righteousness that will secure one a dwelling-place in the new earth, wherein righteousness shall dwell. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.5}

The importance of this truth is shown by what it will do for us. Christ showed in his prayer that it will sanctify us. The apostle Peter writes: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit,” etc. 1 Peter 1:22. And Christ, who declared himself to be the embodiment of the truth, said to the Jews who believed in him: “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:31, 32. But the same apostle who wrote, “And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, *purifying their hearts by faith*.” Acts 15:8, 9. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.6}

From these texts which we have just grouped together, we learn that the law of God is the truth that makes men free, and purifies the heart, but that it is not the law in the abstract that does this, but “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,” and that this is effected by “the Spirit of truth.” The law of God is called a “law of liberty,” and so it is, but only to those who obey it; and none can obey it except as they yield to the striving of the Holy Spirit, and come to Christ. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.7}

The truth which makes free is not an outward compliance with the ten commandments. The Pharisees outwardly appeared righteous unto men, yet they were in the worst kind of bondage. David says: “Behold, thou desirest *truth in the inward parts*; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.” Psalm 51:6. And speaking of the man who shall abide in the holy hill of the Lord, who shall be “delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God,” he says that it is the one that “walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh *the truth in his heart*.” Psalm 15:2. The man who does that is one with Christ, even as he was one with the Father, because Christ had the law in his heart. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.8}

The keeping of the commandments of truth is all that God requires of man. Says Solomon: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14. There can be nothing more required of man than to do this; but it cannot be done except by faith in Christ. This does not mean a passive assent to the principles of the Christian religion, but such faith as brings Christ to dwell in the heart, so that he can work in us that which is good. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.9}

The comprehensiveness of the law of truth is shown by the text last quoted. It is the whole duty of man, and by it every work, with every secret thing, shall be brought into Judgment. This shows that the commandments of God are that word of God which is “quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12. Keeping the commandments is something more than a form. It consists in having every act, every word, and every thought just such as they would be if Jesus were dwelling within the man, acting and speaking and thinking through him. It consists in acting and speaking in every instance just as Jesus would act or speak under the same circumstances. Surely this cannot be done unless Christ dwells in the heart. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.10}

Who, then, has outgrown the ten commandments? Are they of a lower grade of morality than is required of Christians in this age? Nay, verily. Let no one say that to exalt the law of God is to deny Christ; for in no other way can we so exalt Christ, and so appreciate the necessity of having his continual presence with us, as by exalting the breadth and holiness of the law. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.11}

But will there ever be any people on the earth who will have attained to that perfection of character? Indeed there will be. Says the prophet: “The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth.” Zephaniah 3:13. When the Lord comes there will be a company who will be found complete in him,” having not their own righteousness, but that perfect righteousness of God which comes by faith of Jesus Christ. To perfect this work in the hearts of individuals, and to prepare such a company, is the work of the Third Angel’s Message. That message, therefore, is not a mass of dry theories, but is a living, practical reality. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.12}

Happy will those persons be who form the remnant of Israel, in whose hearts the righteousness of God’s law of truth is perfected. For them mansions will be prepared in that glorious city wherein there shall in nowise enter anything that defileth, “neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.” Revelation 21:27. And as they approach that great and strong city, the walls and bulwarks of which are everlasting salvation, the cry will be raised. “Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which *keepeth the truth*, may enter in” (Isaiah 26:1, 2); and as the everlasting doors are lifted up, they will enter, with the King of glory at their head, and they shall henceforth have a right to the tree of life, and dwell in his presence forever. W. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.13}

**“The Cause of Apostasy” The Signs of the Times, 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

The apostle Peter, speaking of an apostasy of false teachers in the Christian church, and to be especially abundant in the last days, says of them: “For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.” 2 Peter 2:18. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.14}

There is here the expression of a most important fact, and one which, if overlooked, will cause the ruin of many. That is, that the false teachers of the last days will allure believers into the acceptance of false doctrines, not by directly preaching those errors, but by the seductive influence of the lusts of the flesh. The situation as indicated by the apostle is this: Here are some who are “clean escaped from them who live in error.” They have accepted the truth concerning the Sabbath of the Lord, the nature of man, the ministration of angels, the coming of the Lord, and the inheritance of the saints, and are free from the gross errors that have been handed down to the popular churches as a legacy from the Catholic Church. And now these false teachers come around, and by acting as the devil’s agents in appealing to the lusts of the flesh, they accomplish the ruin of those souls, and cause them to deny the truth which they once held. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.15}

This proves again the truth that infidelity is not a thing of the intellect, but of the heart and life. Many men have apostatized from Christianity as a whole, and others from what is known as the Third Angel’s Message, ostensibly because they found it impossible any longer to hold to the doctrine. But if the inner life, the secret thoughts, of those men were known, it would be found in every instance that the cause of their unbelief was impurity of thought and life. The cherished lusts of the flesh will be found to be the worm at the root, which destroys the vitality of the plant, and makes it impossible to maintain its position in the soil of faith. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 790.16}

It is a universal truth that, “if any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine.” That is, if any man has a sincere desire to have the will of God wrought in him, to deny ungodlienss, and worldly lusts, God will reveal to him in some way what is truth. And the man who has some truth, who is in that condition, will not only have no difficulty in retaining his faith, but will receive greater light of the same kind. “Light is sown for the *righteous*,” and “the path of the *just* is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.1}

It is a very common saying that the man who holds the Bible doctrine of the soul, and the condition of man in death, can never be a Spiritualist. That is true, providing he *retains* his belief in the Bible doctrine of the soul, and of the condition of man in death. But if he lets go his hold on that doctrine, he has no safeguard whatever against that great masterpiece of deception. The question, then, is, How can he continue to believe the Bible doctrine, so as to be safe from that deception? The answer, and the only answer, that can be given is that he can hold to his belief only by living a pure life, by cleansing the soul from every defilement, by being pure in heart. The man who fails to live such a life, who regards iniquity in his heart, who loves sensual pleasures, and who indulges in impure imaginings, will surely fall away from the truth, and no power can prevent him; while the man who has true charity, godliness, temperance, patience, virtue, etc., can never fall. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.2}

Paul says that when Satan works with “all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,” he will cause the ruin of those who “received not the love of the truth.” He does not say that those are deceived who received not the truth, but who received not *the love* of the truth, intimating that many who have received the truth may be led captive by the deceptions of Satan. The love of the truth is to be distinguished from love *for* the truth. The “love of the truth” is the love of God, the love which brought the truth to man, a portion of the same love which God has in his heart for man, in which is no trace of impurity; for “the truth” of God is nothing else but the wisdom which is from above, and that is “first pure.” The man who has not “the love of the truth,” might as well be destitute of the form of the truth. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” This is a truth that applies to this present life as well as to the future. It is true that when we reach the heavenly Jerusalem, we shall see God face to face, with no evil between; but all who share that inestimable blessing must in this life have, like Moses, “endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.” The soul that is as pure as the sunlight may enjoy the closest communion with God, and has a hold that will keep it when others fall around him. There shall in nowise enter into the New Jerusalem “anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abominations,” but only those who have washed their robes of character, and made them *white* in the blood of the Lamb. W. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.3}

**“How to ‘Christianize the Masses’” The Signs of the Times, 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Philadelphia *Times* has the following pertinent remarks relative to “Christianizing the Masses,” a question which is now being generally discussed by both press and pulpit:- {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.4}

“The first and essential step toward Christianizing the masses in our centers of population is to Christianize the Christians. Until that is done, nothing else can be done that will be effective. While the churches remain pleasant and fashionable, Sunday clubs, whose sittings are sold to the highest bidders, and in which the worship is conducted in a fashionable manner, that says to the poor, “These are no places for you,” the poor will stay away. Until Christians are willing to make their religion one of self-sacrifice-willing to worship on equal terms with the masses-they will have little influence in the way of inducing them to come into the churches.... The great wall which riches and social distinction have raised between the Protestant church and the masses must be broken down, or, in spite of all, the proportion of church goers to population in our large cities will continue to decrease.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.5}

The *Times* is not, we believe, a religious journal, but it has stated this matter much more aptly than even many of the ministers who have but little power for good, and before they can reach the masses they must gain the experience for which David prayed. “Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation,” he cried, “and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.” Truly, “the first and essential step toward Christianizing the masses, is to Christianize [convert] the Christians.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.6}

**“The Book of Romans” The Signs of the Times, 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

With the next issue we begin a series of articles of a practical nature upon the book of Romans, designed to aid the Bible-reader to a better understanding of that portion of God’s word, that he may read and study it with more pleasure and profit. Our plan is to make each article distinct and complete in itself as far as possible, so that whoever has only a single number of the paper, may read with profit the article which it contains; and yet, from the very nature of the case, many of the articles will depend much upon what has gone before. Under the heading of each article will appear the chapter and verse of Romans which is the subject of comment, so that all who desire to do so may keep the connection of thought. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.7}

Quite often a single sentence will furnish the basis for an entire article, and around it will be gathered other passages of Scripture relating to the same topic, so that as the thoughtful reader peruses the book of Romans each verse may teem with suggestions of deep spiritual truths. It is very true, as Chalmers says, that “people, in reading the Bible, are often not conscious of the extreme listlessness with which they pass along the familiar and oft-repeated words of Scripture, without the impression of their meaning being at all present with the thoughts,-and how, during the mechanical currency of the thoughts through their lips, the thinking power is often asleep for whole passages together.” One object of these articles will be to make this impossible to the reader of the book of Romans, by linking so many thoughts with each passage that they will involuntary come to his mind as he reads it. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.8}

Very little heed will be given to the varying opinions of the numerous commentators, our object being to lead the mind of the reader directly to the truth contained in the sacred word, and help him to draw from it for himself some of its wealth. Questions which any who read this may wish to ask upon any portion of the epistle, will be thankfully received, and will be considered in their proper order. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.9}

As to the time and place of the writing of this epistle, there is little doubt. When the apostle wrote it, he had never visited Rome, but was planning to do so. Romans 1:10, 11; 15:23-25. From this last text we learn that he was just about to visit Jerusalem, with the contributions which the Gentile Christians had made for the support of the poor saints in that city. Now this contribution was taken on Paul’s last visit to Jerusalem. Acts 20:2, 3; 24:17. On this trip he was accompanied by certain brethren whose names are mentioned in the first epistle to the Corinthians, some of whom undoubtedly lived there; and the letter itself commends, and was evidently delivered by, Phebe, “a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea” (Romans 16:1), the port of Corinth. The epistle to the Romans was, therefore, undoubtedly written from Corinth, about 58 A.D. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.10}

There is probably no other epistle of Paul to which Peter’s words (2 Peter 3:16) have more special application than to the epistle to the Romans. In it there are “some things hard to be understood,” and thousands of unlearned and unstable souls have wrested them to their own destruction. But the apostle does not say that there are things in Paul’s writings that cannot be understood. That there are some things in the book of Romans, as well as in other portions of the Bible, that no man does fully understand cannot be doubted. Yet no one will wrest these things to his own destruction, unless he has previously done so to the other portions of Scripture, which are more plain. That is, the man who has a sincere desire for truth, and who reverently accepts and firmly holds to those portions of Scripture which are comparatively simple, will not be harassed by doubts as to those things which seem utterly to baffle his comprehension. Believing that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” he will know that the more obscure parts cannot conflict with any other part and so will possess his soul in patience until prayerful study, or the arising of the Day-star, shall lighten up the whole. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.11}

That the epistle to the Romans is not a book for learned theologian alone, but that the common people may understand it, will be evident to all who think for a moment of the persons to whom it was written. It was written as a letter to the church in Rome. Although Rome was the metropolis of the world, it is not at all to be doubted that the apostle could have written to them as he did to the church in the proud and opulent city of Corinth: “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.” 1 Corinthians 1:26. The church in Rome was doubtless principally composed, as most of the true churches of Christ have been in all ages, of the laboring classes, those whose station in life was lowly, and who had not enjoyed the advantages of what is known as a “liberal education.” There were carpenters, and blacksmiths, and masons, and shop-keepers, and shoe-makers, and tent-makers, and gardeners, and housekeepers, among those to whom Paul wrote, and doubtless they formed the majority. Nevertheless the apostle wrote to them, expecting them to understand his letter. The apostle who wrote, “In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue” (1 Corinthians 14:19), could not write an epistle in language impossible to be understood by the common people which composed the church. Of course they needed to receive and study it in the spirit in which it was written. They needed the aid of the Spirit of God, in order to understand it. But we have the promise of the same Spirit if we but ask for it, and so we may understand it as well as they. Surely the Spirit which indicted the epistle can make it plain to those who humbly put themselves on the way of being guided by it. On this point, the following remarks by Dr. Albert Barnes, in the introduction to his comments on this epistle, are most pertinent: {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 791.12}

“It cannot be denied that one reason why the epistles of Paul have been regarded as so difficult, has been an unwillingness to admit the truth of the plain doctrines which he teaches. The heart is by nature opposed to them, and comes to believe them with great reluctance. This feeling will account for no small part of the difficulties felt in regard to this epistle. There is one great maxim in interpreting the Scriptures, that can never be departed from. It is, that men can never understand them aright, until they are willing to suffer them to speak out their fair and proper meaning. When men are determined *not* to find certain doctrines in the Bible, nothing is more natural than that they should find difficulties in it, and complain much of its great obscurity and mystery.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.1}

“Perhaps, on the whole, there is no book of the New Testament that more demands an humble, docile, and prayerful disposition in its interpretation than this epistle. Its profound doctrines; its abstruse inquiries; and the opposition of many of those doctrines to the views of the unrenewed and unsubdued heart of man, make a spirit of docility and prayer peculiarly needful in its investigation. No man ever yet understood the reasonings and views of the apostle Paul but under the influence of elevated piety. None ever found opposition to his doctrines recede, and difficulties vanish, who did not bring the mind in an humble frame to receive *all* that has been revealed; and that, in a spirit of humble prayer, did not purpose to lay aside all bias, and open the heart to the full influence of the elevated truths which he inculcates. Where there is a willingness that God should reign and do all his pleasure, this epistle may be in its general character easily understood.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.2}

Olshausen, also, after giving an analysis of the epistle, says:- {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.3}

“Such being the nature of the contents of the epistle to the Romans, it may be understood why it is usually regarded as very difficult. Indeed, it may be said that where there is wanting in the reader’s own life an experience analogous to that of the apostle, it is utterly unintelligible. Everything in the epistle wears so strongly the impress of the greatest originality, liveliness and freshness of experience; the apostle casts so sure and clear a glance into the most delicate circumstances of spiritual life in the regenerate; he can with such admirable clearness resolve the particular into the general, that the reader who occupies the low and confined level of natural worldly knowledge, now feels his brain reel as he gazes at those stupendous periods of development in the universe disclosed by Paul, and now finds his vision fail as it contemplates the minute and microscopic processes which Paul unveils in the hidden depth of the soul. Where, however, analogous inward experience, and the spiritual eye sharpened thereby, come to the task, the essential purport of the epistle makes itself clear, even to the simplest mind.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.4}

We believe that both of these writers have stated the exact truth. A study of the epistle, with a prayerful, sincere desire to know and do God’s will, and to have him work his own will in the soul, will lead to a general understanding of it, and will aid in giving the spiritual experience of which it treats. But when the Spirit has performed its work so that the individual can exclaim, Oh, the blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! Oh, the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile! he will study the epistle with an enjoyment so much more intense that it will seem as though he never before knew anything about it. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.5}

That the Holy Spirit, which is given to guide us into all truth, may so soften our hearts as to make them easily susceptible to its influence; that we may have such a longing desire and determined purpose to do the will of God, that he may cause us to know of the doctrine; and that so we may find in this epistle that reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, which shall make us perfect, “thoroughly furnished unto all good works,” is the sincere prayer of the writer. W. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.6}

**“How It May Be Accomplished” The Signs of the Times, 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Interior* has in its November supplement some extracts from what purport to be the Scriptures of the most ancient Egyptians, and in commenting on them it takes occasion to eulogize to some extent the Egyptians sun-god, Osiris, contrasting him with Baal and Dagon, the Asiatic conceptions of Deity. It then says:- {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.7}

“The Christian would have no difficulty in worshiping Osiris. Osiris was God. Osiris was to God what the sun shining through a murky haze is to the sun rising in unclouded splendor. His outlines and attributes, and his attitude toward man as Creator, Father, Saviour, and righteous Judge, are all there, and not so very dimly, either. The obscuring veil between Ptah-hotep and God was a good deal more transparent than that which hangs before the devotee in every Roman Catholic fane. Abraham came out of Ur into a theological sunrise. God unveiled himself, and Abraham became the apostle of the monotheistic reformation, which restored the primitive church. If we are going to allow Romanism to stand in our view as a Christian church, despite its corruptions, we will find it hard to exclude Ptah-hotep and his fellow-worshipers of Osiris. There is a shorter drop between the Jehovah of the first of Genesis and the Osiris of Egypt than there is between the Christ of the gospels and the Christ of the Vatican. If we count as Christian the worshipers of Mary, and admit that they have enough of truth to save them, we shall certainly find no difficulty in including among the elect the followers of Ptah-hotep and Zoroaster, and other sages of the ancient world who worshiped God.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.8}

It then goes on, consistently with the above, to deny that Abraham was “the sole and solitary member of the church living on earth during his time,” and claims that from all the heathen nations there was “a mighty flood pouring into the golden city.” The *Interior’s* position is consistent. If the Catholic Church be a Christian church, then it is certain that the worshipers of Osiris and of Apollo cannot be barred from the list. But when that is granted, it must also be claimed that it was unnecessary for the Lord to bring Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, and a mistake to deliver the Israelites from Egypt, in order that they might serve him. Straws show which way the wind blows; and the indications are that the long-dreamed-of temporal millennium, when all the world shall be converted, will be brought about by the acknowledgment of not only Catholics, but Mohammedans, Buddhists, and the most enlightened heathen nations as Christians. If the Catholic Church is to be acknowledged as Christian there is no reason why the heathen religion should not be called Christian also. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.9}

**“What of the Cities?” The Signs of the Times, 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

“What of the Cities?” is the title of an article in the New York *Observer* of December 13, in which the needs of the cities, as set forth in a conference held recently in Chickering Hall, New York, is discussed at considerable length. Some of the facts brought out were the same as those presented at the Syracuse convention, referred to in these columns last week, under the title, “Iniquity Abounding,” but some are both new and startling, and relate not alone to New York, but also to other large cities in various parts of our country. “It appears,” says the *Observer*, “that while in the whole country one in five is a member of some evangelical church, in New York there is only one in thirteen; in Chicago, one in twenty-one; in Cincinnati, one in twenty-three; in San Francisco, one in thirty-seven.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.10}

It was to consider these and other facts of a like nature, especially as relating to New York, that the conference was convened; and the paper previously quoted says: “It was undenominational, and met to consider the gospel needs of the city. It met none too soon. We have no more burning question to meet and solve than this.” “There are great masses of humanity in our great cities that are Christless. Could all the church bells in Christendom be rung at one time, these masses would be unmoved. The present means of sowing the gospel seed is utterly inadequate. Learned divines may thunder away at these non-church goers as sternly as they please. The church goers listen and approve, but the thunderbolts never reach their intended victims. They never come where the preachers are.” “They are just as likely to come into our churches as the heathen of the Congo, and no more. They must be reached in the same way. Somebody must take the gospel to them, and preach Jesus to them, or they will live and die ignorant and indifferent, indifferent became ignorant.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.11}

Again the *Observer* says: “The saloon is rightly given as one of the antagonistic forces. New York has twenty saloons to one Protestant church, while San Francisco has sixty-five places for the sale of liquor, to one evangelical church. Multiply the sixty-five saloons of San Francisco by the number of hours per week they ply their business; then take the sum of hours per week in which the churches are in use, and the contrast is too painfully impressive.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.12}

Such is the condition of so-called Christian cities; and it was plainly stated in the Syracuse Convention, before referred to, that “the proportion of non-church goers is as great in the country as in the city;” and yet we are asked by some to believe that the world is rapidly growing better, that the world will soon be conquered for Christ, and the millennium ushered in! But the facts do not warrant the belief that the world is improving in morals. On the contrary, the evidences thicken on every hand which show that we are even now in the last days, when the Scriptures assure us that iniquity shall abound. Surely iniquity does abound, and on every hand the hearts of thoughtful men are “failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 792.13}

**“The Sure Word Cannot Fail” The Signs of the Times, 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

The psalmist, speaking of the heavens and the earth, says: “They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.” Now read the following from “A Bird’s-eye View of the World,” by the eminent French geographer, Onesince Reclus, and you will see how facts sustain the prophecy:- {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 793.1}

“In three or four generations the year 2000 will dawn on men dismayed at the sight of exhausted continents, worn-out islands, rivers run dry, forests consumed, the world ripe, and famine at the gates. The planet will be old, but, more than that, it will be mutilated.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 793.2}

He has put the time off too long, but he shows the fact that the world is getting old and worn out. This one fact is sufficient to show that the end cannot be far off. The sure word of prophecy cannot fail. Soon the time will come when this old earth, the scene of so many bloody wars, will be renewed, and made to blossom as the rose; and then “the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 793.3}

**“The Commentary. Resisting the Truth” The Signs of the Times, 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

***OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.*  
(Lesson 2, January 12, 1889.)**

1. When Moses and Aaron delivered their message to Pharaoh, what answer did they get? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.1}

“And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” Exodus 5:1, 2. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.2}

2. Of what did Pharaoh accuse them? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.3}

“And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens.” Verses 4, 5. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.4}

3. What additional burden was placed on the Israelites in consequence? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.5}

“And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves. And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish ought thereof; for they be idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain words.” Verses 6-9. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.6}

4. When Moses the second time repeated God’s promise to the Israelites, how did they receive his words? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.7}

“And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel; but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.” Exodus 6:9. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.8}

5. How did this make Moses feel about going again before Pharaoh? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.9}

“And Moses spake before the Lord, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who am of uncircumcised lips?” Verse 12. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.10}

6. What assurance did the Lord give him? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.11}

“And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.” Exodus 7:1. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.12}

7. What was meant by this? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.13}

“Thou shalt speak all that I command thee; and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land.” Exodus 7:2. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.14}

“And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people; and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.” Exodus 4:16. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.15}

8. What was Moses told to do when Pharaoh should ask for a miracle? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.16}

“When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Show a miracle for you; then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent.” Exodus 7:9. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.17}

9. When this miracle was performed, what did Pharaoh’s sorcerers do? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.18}

“And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the Lord had commanded; and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents; but Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods.” Verses 10-12. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.19}

10. What manifestation of God’s power followed this act of the magicians? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.20}

“But Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods.” Verse 12, last clause. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.21}

11. What effect did the rejection of this evidence have upon Pharaoh? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.22}

“And Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had spoken.” Verse 13, see Revised Version. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.23}

12. What were Moses and Aaron told to do next? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.24}

And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone.” Verse 19. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.25}

13. What was the result? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.26}

“And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. And the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.” Verses 20, 21. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.27}

14. What destroyed the effect of this miracle upon Pharaoh? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.28}

“And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments; and Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the Lord had said.” Verse 22. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.29}

15. What plague was next threatened, if the king should refuse to let the people go? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.30}

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs.” Exodus 8:1, 2. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.31}

16. Was this done? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.32}

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt. And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt.” Verses 5, 6. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.33}

17. How severe was this plague? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.34}

“And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading-troughs; and the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants.” “And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt.” Verses 3, 4, 6. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.35}

18. What did the magicians do? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.36}

“And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt.” Verse 7. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.37}

19. What request and promise did Pharaoh then make? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.38}

“Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Entreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the Lord.” Verse 8. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.39}

20. Why did not his magicians and sorcerers remove the plague? See note. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.40}

21. What is a magician?-“*One skilled in magic; one who practices the black art; an enchanter, a necromancer; a sorcerer or sorceress.”-Webster. See also definition of “magic.”* {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.41}

22. What is sorcery?-“*Divination by the assistance or supposed assistance of evil spirits; or the power of commanding evil spirits; magic; enchantment; witchcraft.”-Webster. See also definition of “witchcraft” and “enchantment.”* {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.42}

23. Whom did the heathen worship? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.43}

“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. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.44}

24. Then on whose side were Pharaoh and his magicians? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.45}

25. What does the Bible say is Satan’s sole work? {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.46}

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” 1 Peter 5:8. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.47}

(*Concluded next week.*)

**NOTES**

If in our version the word “Jehovah” were allowed to appear wherever it does in the corresponding place in the Hebrew, the sense would often appear more clearly. “Jehovah” is the distinctive title of the one true God. Paul says, “There be gods many, and lords many; but to us there is but one God.” He is the one who made all things, and who exists by his own power. This God, Pharaoh did not know. When Moses and Aaron said, “Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Let my people go,” he rudely exclaimed, “Who is Jehovah, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go.” If Moses had said, as our version indicates, “Thus saith the *Lord*,” it would not have been distinctive, for the sun-god, which Pharaoh worshiped, corresponded to the Canaanitish Baal, which means “lord.” Pharaoh knew many lords and gods, and one above all, the sun-god, which was known as “*the* lord;” he knew Ra, and Osiris, and Isis, and Phthah, and Set, but he did not know Jehovah, the only Lord. He might have known God, but, like the other heathen, he did not like to retain God in his knowledge. Still God gave him this opportunity to know and to recognize him; and when Pharaoh haughtily said, “I know not Jehovah,” the Lord brought judgments upon him until he was forced to confess is power. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.48}

“And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works?” The word “let” is used in its primitive sense of hindering, or causing to cease. That this is so, is shown by the next verse, where the king continues, “Behold, the people of the land now are many, and yet make them *rest* from their burdens.” Whatever opinion may be held as to the reason, this much is certain, that in consequence of the coming of Moses and Aaron, and what they had said, the Israelites had to some extent ceased from their work. This is still further shown by the fact that Pharaoh said of them, “They be idle” (verse 8), and to them, “Ye are idle, ye are idle” (verse 17). It was because of this that the king increased their task, compelling them to make brick without straw. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.49}

To the Jews Jesus once said, “Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.” John 12:35. Nothing is more evident than that when a person turns away from the light he goes into darkness. Light and darkness are opposite conditions, so that if a man is not in the light he is in the dark. That proposition needs no argument. It was on this principle that Pharaoh’s heart was hardened. Ample evidence of the superiority of God’s power over that of Satan, as exhibited through the magicians, was given to Pharaoh, but when he refused to accept it, that very rejection was a hardening of his heart. The light which, if it were accepted, would acquaint him with God, was rejected, and by thus shutting himself farther away from God, hardness of heart and blindness of mind necessarily followed. For this no one was to blame but Pharaoh himself. The Revised Version renders Exodus 7:9 thus: “And Pharaoh’s heart was hardened.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.50}

The only reason that can be given why the magicians did not remove the plague of frogs, is that they could not. That they would gladly have done everything in their power to destroy the effect of the miracle upon the mind of Pharaoh, and to make him believe that the power that was with Moses was no greater than that with them, there is no reason to doubt. It is most reasonable, also, to conclude that as the king had called the magicians to his assistance for the purpose of withstanding Moses, he would first call upon them to remove the plague. But they could not. The fact that Pharaoh was obliged to call upon Moses and Aaron to remove the plague, was an additional humiliation, and emphasized the fact that the power that was with them was greater than the power that was with the magicians. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 794.51}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Advance* says that this is the time when many are tempted to indulge in what are known as “questionable amusements,” such as attendance at theaters, or dance, or play cards?” the writer replies that it is a matter for one’s own conscience. So is everything a matter for one’s own conscience, but the conscience needs to be well instructed. Our reply to the question, “Can a Christian do these things?” would be, Yes, he can, but he will cease to be a Christian. If he wishes to retain his spiritual life, he must keep away. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.1}

One of the subjects under discussion at the Baptist Congress recently held in Richmond, Va., was “Education,” which was taken up under the questions, “How Far Shall the State Educate?” and “Common *versus* Parochial Schools.” On the first, Professor Puryear, of Richmond College,” held that the State should educate only the children of the poor, and that only in the rudiments of knowledge; and that it could not give any religious instruction without violating the rights of conscience.” With the latter part of this view especially, we most heartily agree, and we are sorry to learn from the *Independent’s* correspondent, that “this very conservative view is now held by only a minority in the South.” It is the only view that will preserve religious freedom in this country. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.2}

The best things are not always the best known. Quite recently we noticed in the account of the opening of a training school for male nurses, at Bellevue Hospital, New York, the statement that “there is no other school of its kind in America.” But we know that there is. the Medical and Surgical Sanitarium, at Battle Creek, Mich., has a training school for both male and female nurses, which has been in successful operation for about three years. Each student has a two years’ drill in practical nursing, and the vast number of patients and the variety of diseases treated at the Sanitarium, make the facilities for practical instruction unsurpassed in this country. Besides this, regular lectures are given throughout the entire course, and the students are thoroughly drilled in physiology, hygiene, and all the principles underlying the proper care of the wick, and the treatment of ordinary diseases. We had the pleasure of being present at the exercises when one class was graduated last month, and learned something of the readiness with which the students could meet emergencies. The school has not been boomed by a big endowment, but the Sanitarium nurses are already in great demand. The school has a good patronage, but there are yet scores and hundreds of young people who ought to avail themselves of its advantages. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.3}

The apostle states in 1 Corinthians 10:20, “that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God.” The gods of the heathen were supposed by them to have once lived on this earth. Great men and mighty warriors were deified, or made gods. Such were Jupiter, and Saturn, and Mars, and Venus, and Diana, and all the multitude of false gods. So when the Bible says that the children of Israel joined themselves to Baal-peor and ate the sacrifices of the dead, it means that they ate the sacrifices offered to dead heroes, whom the idols of the heathen were made to honor. So those who paid homage to the idols, or deified dead, really worshiped devils, through whom were wrought all the wonders ascribed to these powers. Psalm 105:28, 36, 37. This is just what modern Spiritualism is doing today. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.4}

The *Catholic Home*, a paper published in Chicago, referring to the movement which is getting under headway in that city, “to abolish the Sunday slavery, and to suppress Sunday crime,” says that Catholic sentiment in that city, which has lain so long dormant under flagitious outrage, is now awakening and is anxious to do battle for home and altar, and declares that new vigor will now be put into the struggle of good citizenship against anarchy. The statement that the movement *is* for the suppression of “Sunday crime” shows what their idea of good citizenship is. It is strange that they cannot see that such a movement, instead of being against anarchy, is in reality in favor of disregard to the laws; for by their opposition to “Sunday crime” they give tacit leave to criminals to break the laws on other days with impunity. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.5}

The pastors and officers of thirty-three German Evangelical Churches in New York and Brooklyn, met one evening last week and formed an organization which, it is said, “may lead to important political results.” One of the leading ministers stated that its objects is “to maintain and defend the civil and religious liberty” of this country, whenever it seems to be in danger. He said that it was proposed to break the power of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. This latter they will find an impossibility, and the probabilities are that this league will simply try to substitute one ecclesiastical domination for another, or else will think to purify Catholicism by a union with it; and either plan would only make a bad matter worse. There is always danger when ministers and church people organize to effect “important political results,” no matter how good their intentions may be. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.6}

On Sunday evening of last week a mass-meeting in the interest of city missions was held in the place of the regular services at the First Baptist Church, San Francisco, at which one of the most prominent lawyers in the city was present, and spoke as follows:- {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.7}

“We hear a great deal of heathenism in foreign lands, and recently a missionary came here and raised $75,000 for the benefit of the ignorant. We ought to send missionaries to foreign lands to raise money to teach the people in this city. There is no place under the canopy of heaven where there is so much sin, so much wickedness, crime, and riot as right here in this city of San Francisco. We need the missionaries here, and we need them badly. To-night there are 40,000 young men, and many young women, in saloons and places of a like nature because they have nowhere else to go.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.8}

This is undoubtedly true, yet we do not regard it as a reason why missionary work should not be done in foreign lands. If the gospel had to convert the entire world, then it might be well to have all the people in one country converted before beginning to evangelize those of another; but since the gospel is to be “preached in all the world for a *witness* unto all nations,” the more widely it can be spread at once the better. In spite of all the effort put forth, there will be millions of heathen in the United States when the end comes. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.9}

One of the most common and most hurtful practices among those who have named the name of Christ, is that alluded to in 2 Corinthians 10:12. Says the apostle: “We dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” Christ is the great example, the only perfect pattern, and the Christians can follow others only as they follow Christ. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.10}

Said the apostle: “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” But in thus following Paul, they would really have followed Christ, and they were to follow the apostle only as he followed the Master, and thus the life of Christ, not that of his apostle, was the pattern. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.11}

It is not enough that we should be as good as our neighbor. “Every man,” says the apostle John, “that hath this hope [the Christian hope] in him, purifieth himself,” not as his brother in the church is pure, not as his minister is pure, but “even as he [Christ] is pure.” “By beholding we become changed,” and if we behold Christ we shall at last bear his divine image; but if we behold our imperfect brethren we shall bear with us to the Judgment their imperfections, which instead of serving to excuse us, as we once fondly imagined they would, will serve only to sink us in perdition. {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.12}

The New York *Tribune* reports a prominent Hebrew gentleman of that city as saying that “the time is not far distant when Hebrews, as well as Christians, will worship on the first day of the week. “The Jewish press,” said he, “are working to bring about the change, and it is a reform greatly to be desired.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.13}

**“Strength Instead of Weakness” The Signs of the Times, 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

Physiologists tell us that a well-set broken bone of a healthy person becomes stronger than before it was broken. The new process which unites the part is stronger than the parts united. There is a precious thought here for those struggling against special sins. That sin may be born in a man, inherited from a long list of ancestors; its power in him may be made strong by yielding to it, till by it Satan leads him captive at will. It is the man’s weak point. The disposition which leads to the commission of the sin is the weakness of his otherwise strong character. It is not the sin which weakness; it is the disposition, the underlying selfishness, from which the sin springs. Realizing this, knowing by the law and Spirit of God and our own repeated failures our own weakness, our broken character, we can come boldly to the great Physician, place our case entirely in his hands, and “out of weakness” be “made strong.” Hebrews 11:24. The weak point in our characters can through grace become our strong one. The hatred of all sin will be more fully developed when the power of the besetting sin is seen; and God’s grace will never seem so precious, nor his love so strong, as when viewed from the victor’s side of vanquished sin. Therefore “brethren, be *strong in the Lord* and the *power of his might*.” {SITI December 28, 1888, p. 800.14}