

many—even his Doric utterance not without its charm, to whom his brethren looked as a ready champion in the hour of battle when truth or liberty was assailed, and carrying beneath his controversial armour a true and loving heart; Professor Eadie, with his colossal learning and manly simplicity; Drs. McMichael and Johnstone, even more at home in conferences for union than in keen-edged debate; Drs. Robson and MacEwan, men of unfailing tact, practical wisdom, and charity."

#### YOU CAN KEEP IT.

We mean the Sabbath. There has been a debate of late as to whether the Sabbath, as we have known it, is going or has gone from among us. We do not share the views of those who think the Sabbath has disappeared. We know there is much Sabbath desecration. We mourn over it. But it would not be true to put us down as a Sabbath-breaking nation. There is yet a difference, and a wide one, between our Sundays and the other days of the week.

But all this apart. The point we wish to press here is that it lies in every individual's power to keep the Sabbath holy. The Sunday newspaper is published, but you do not need to read it. The Sunday excursion is advertised, but you are not compelled to go upon it. Your neighbour may employ the day in looking over business accounts, but that does not affect the question of your duty. He may spend it in idleness at home, or the entertainment of friends, but that does not close the church doors for you. Indeed, if these things are as they are, it is so much the more reason why you, who believe in the sacredness of the Sabbath, should be more than ever scrupulous to keep it holy.

We are in hearty sympathy with every effort that is made to secure man's legal right to his rest day. We would use every available mode to spread sound views as to the sacredness of the Sabbath, and the resulting blessing if it is properly observed. And then—and this is our point here—we would urge upon the individual his own duty and privilege. Whatever may be true in the community at large, your own duty is clear. Whatever may be the prevalent demoralization, you need not allow yourself in its current. You have the Church; you have the Bible; you can have your hour of retirement with God. In the public services of religion, and in the privacy of your own home, you can pass the day—resting according to the commandment.

It is just here that much may be done to establish and perpetuate sound principles. Every Sabbath-keeping individual is a strong argument in favour of the proper observance of the day of rest; and so, and, if possible, with increased intensity, is every Sabbath-keeping family. You can help to multiply such arguments. The command is, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." You can obey the command.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

#### THE LAST DANCE.

During the occupancy of the city of Moscow by the French army, a party of officers and soldiers determined to have a military levée, and for this purpose chose the deserted palace of a nobleman. That night the city was set on fire. As the sun went down they began to assemble. The women who followed the fortunes of the French army were decorated for the occasion. The gayest and noblest of the army were there, and merriment reigned over the crowd.

During the dance the fire rapidly approached them; they saw it coming, but felt no fear. At length the building next the one they occupied was on fire. Coming to the windows, they gazed upon the billows of fire which swept over the city, and then returned to their amusements. Again and again they left their pleasure to watch the progress of the flames. At length the dance ceased, and the necessity of leaving the scene of merriment became apparent to all. They were enveloped in a flood of fire, and gazed on it with deep and awful solemnity.

At last the fire, communicating to their own building, caused them to prepare for flight, when a brave young officer, named Carnot, waved his jewelled hand above his head and exclaimed, "One dance more, and defiance to the flames!" All caught the enthusiasm of the moment, and "One dance more, and defiance to the flames!" burst from the lips of all. The dance commenced; louder and louder grew the sound of music, and faster fell the pattering of footsteps of

dancing men and women, when suddenly they heard a cry, "The fire has reached the magazine! Fly! fly for your lives!" One moment they stood transfixed with terror; they did not know the magazine was there, and ere they recovered from their stupor the vault exploded; the building was shattered to pieces, and the dancers were hurried into a fearful eternity.

Thus it will be in the final day. Men will be as careless as those ill-fated revellers—yea, there are thousands and tens of thousands as careless now. They speak of death, the grave, judgment and eternity. They pause a moment in search for pleasure, but soon dash into the world and forgetfulness as before. God's hand is laid upon them in sickness, but no sooner are they restored than they forget it all and hurry on. Death enters their homes, and the cry is heard, "Prepare to meet thy God!" but soon, like Carnot, they say, "One dance more, and defiance to the flames," and hurry on. The Spirit of the living God speaks powerfully home to their hearts, and they shake, tremble, and are amazed; but earth casts its spell around them, and sings to them songs, and with the cry, "Time enough by-and-bye," they speed on, stifling the voice, till often, ere days or months have passed, the sword has descended, the Judge has come, and the soul is lost forever.

#### CHRISTIAN DUTIES.

If you come to us and say you are a praying man, we answer we are glad; but we would like to ask your wife and children what your praying is doing for you. If you say you daily read the Bible, that is right; but let us ask your partner in business how much of its teaching you practise. If you say you are a member of the Church, we are glad of that, if you are a worthy member; if not—we are sorry for the Church. But let us go on to the street to see whether the people you daily meet think you ought to be a church member. So it comes to pass that a bundle of Christian duties may be dry and useless, or they may be the evidence of a sincere Christian life. Whether a man is a Christian or not depends entirely upon the principles which govern his daily life, and the harvest the world is gathering from that life.—*Golden Rule.*

#### PRAYERS.

Prayers need not to be fine. I believe God abhors fine prayers. If a person ask charity of you in elegant sentences he is not likely to get it. Finery in dress or language is out of place in beggars. I heard a man in the street one day begging aloud by means of an oration. He used grand language in a very pompous style, and I dare say he thought he was sure of getting piles of coppers by his borrowed speech; but I, for one, gave him nothing, but felt more inclined to laugh at his bombast. Many prayer-meeting prayers are a great deal too fine. Keep your figures and metaphors and parabolical expressions for your fellow-creatures. Use them to those who want to be instructed, but do not parade them before God. When we pray, the simpler our prayers are the better; the plainest, humblest language which expresses our meaning is the best.—*Spurgeon.*

THE women and children are the chief obstacles to Christianity in India. When the women are reached, then the strong barriers are broken down. The mothers begin training their babes in daily worship of idols. The offering is placed in the tiny hands, and though the little ones do not then understand the why, the daily duty becomes a habit not easily overcome.

FIVE thousand Babylonian tablets (many of them in an excellent state of preservation), discovered by Mr. Rassam in the mounds of Abu-Habba, are on their way to the British Museum. Abu-Habba is the site of Sippara, the Sepharvaim of the Old Testament. It is not impossible that this find represents the library of Sargon I., whose date is commonly given as 2,000 B.C.

ONE of the noblest institutions in South Africa, by common consent, is the missionary school at Lovedale, under the Free Church of Scotland. It embraces not only Christian teaching, but every form of instruction that can fit the African to till the soil, provide comfortable homes, and advance step by step towards a complete Christian civilization. Even in a humanitarian point of view it is a noble enterprise.

#### MISSIONARY NOTES.

THE American Board has rendered good service to the cause of missions by issuing a large map of China, suitable for use at monthly concerts and other meetings.

THE College of Liberia will be transferred into the country for instruction in manual labour, to which classical studies will be joined, to teach the natives the use and practice of the instruments of European industry.

THE Church of England Missionary Society call for two men for the Niger, one for Persia, a medical man for Gaza, five for Nyanza, one for East Africa, and five for other places. They have already sent nineteen new men this year.

DR. J. S. DENNIS writes. "The church membership of the Syria mission has doubled in five years. It is now about 900. The first 450 may be regarded as the result of forty years of mission work; the last 450 is the result of five years' work."

THE latest Calcutta "Gazette" contains an account of a strange attack made on the idol of Juggernaut, at Pooree, the most sacred shrine in India, by a body of fanatics. The rioters, who numbered twelve men and three women, and were almost in a state of nudity, succeeded in entering the temple, and tried to force their way into the inner recesses. Although upward of 1,000 pilgrims were present, they were not expelled without a severe struggle, in the course of which one intruder was trampled to death. The rest were arrested, and have been sentenced to three months' imprisonment. The inquiry shewed that they belonged to a sect of Hindu dissenters, lately founded in the Sumbulpore district, and known as Kumbhupatias, from the fact that its followers wear ropes of bark round their waists. They allege that their religion was revealed to 64 persons in 1864 by a god incarnate, whom they style Alekhswany—that is, the Lord—whose attributes cannot be described in writing. They believe in the existence of the three hundred millions of Hindu deities, but do not respect their images, saying that it is impossible to represent a Supreme Being whom no one has ever seen. They are subdivided into three classes, two of which renounce the world and make no distinction of caste, while the third leads a family life. Their habits are said to be very filthy, and, like some European sects, they take no medicine in illness, but rely solely on Divine help. Their attack on the Pooree temple was prompted by the belief that if the Juggernaut were burned it would convince the Hindus of the futility of their religion, and the whole world would embrace the truth.

A MISSIONARY to the Gold Coast writes, under date of August 20th, 1881, to London of his failure to establish a school in the territory of the King of Dahomey. He says. Since I wrote to you on January 27th, respecting the stoppage of our work here, I have been almost daily in communication with the authorities; but all my endeavours to re-establish our school were met by only one answer: "You must wait until a message comes from the king." On Monday, the 8th instant, the message came, and was as follows:—"The king sends his compliments, and wishes to know how you get along in his country. The king wishes to inform you that his people cannot be allowed to read your book, and you cannot have a school here to teach the children about the white man's God. If you talk to the people about this book of yours they will not worship the fetish, and we cannot do without fetish in this country. The King of Dahomey is not like any other in the world; and he must keep slaves and have fetish, or else his country would be taken away and given to somebody else, in the same way that Quittah and Lagos were given. If you like to come here to trade, to sell cloth, and guns, and rum, we shall be glad; but we cannot have your book." I was very much disappointed at receiving such a message after being here more than five months, and where there was so much promise of an abundant harvest as the result of our work among the people. I asked why we did not receive such a message when first we came to Whydah, and I repeated, what they ought to know by this time, that our object is neither to trade nor to meddle with their political institutions, but to live in quietness and pursue our work in peace, seeking only for the welfare of the people. I talked in vain. The decree had gone forth and nobody dared to say a word when the king had spoken.