densely peopled. It is the largest town on the island, and likewise the smallest, for Avalon is Catalina.

Our Union church, under Congregational auspices, is the one community church. It has to be even the Y. M. C. A., and that I like. We have opened our Reading Room, and the new parsonage is already where it evokes favorable comment from the passing stranger. In the course of a year this little church touches as large a constituency perhaps as any in Southern California, for Catalina is Southern California's most unique resort. This a great place for the visiting clergyman,and he often lends a hand. Lately, in quick succession, we have had Rev. Mr. Lloyd, a veteran of the Central Pennsylvania Methodist Conference; Rev. T. Rose Price, Episcopalian, of Woolton, England; Rev. Dr. Boyle, Pastor of the First Presbyterian church of Colorado Springs, and Chaplain Wallace, U. S. N.

I have come at last to where I can climb a ridge and see the sun set in the western ocean. And I more than ever believe that for all of us climbers who look afar there is "an east in the west." Meantime our little isle lies in sapphire blue, "while sunshine girds its shores, that peace may make it utterly her own."

C. W. WILLIAMS.

Avalon, California, April, 1900.

## Creeds and Christianity.

Creeds are needful in the church of Jesus Christ. They have oftentimes given a grip upon truth and have formed a bulwark against error. We have no sympathy with those who inveigh against creeds as such. The one who declares himself to have no creed, in that very act declares his creed. It would be impossible for a thinking man to so possess himself with respect to the great questions of Church or State as to be creedless. To be thus he would have to live in a glass receiver, and be cut off from the realms of truth and active life.

But while creeds are a necessity and in many ways helpful, they are not to be identified with the thing itself with which they are connected A creed, therefore, may present phases of Christian truth and not be Christianity itself. This is true of all the great standards of the church, like the Thirty-nine Articles, the Westminister Catechism and the Augsberg Confession. Christianity is that which has been revealed to us from above, and whose principles and teaching are embodied for us in the Word of God. The creed is man's attempt to formulate these principles and teachings. In many a case it is man's attempt to explain and to tabulate that which defies explanation and soars far above tabulation. That has been the case with all attempts to put into formal statement the doctrine of the Trinity. That was the case with the council of Chalcedon which attempted to put into rigid definition the exact truth respecting the two natures of Christ,—his consciousness and will. That has been the case too, when efforts have been made to perfectly outline and define the decrees of God with respect to grace and reprobation. The creed has therefore been man's imperfect embodiment of God's sublime fact. Hence a man may diverge from the creed without diverging from Christianity itself. This has been brought home to us afresh by the recent occurence connecting itself with the Rev. Dwight Hillis, of Plymouth church, New York. Dr. Hillis has repudiated the feature of reprobation in connection with the Divine decrees, as formulated by the Westminister Confession of Faith. We may question the good taste and violent terms in which he did this, as reported by the newspapers, but none, we are inclined to think, will say that Dr. Hillis has ceased in any wise to be a Christian because he has repudiated reprobation. It is of some importance that we hold the difference clearly before our minds. It will kelp us, perhaps, not to be troubled when here and there a man may be reported as having diverged from the creed to which he has subscribed and which hitherto he has sustained. The creed, we repeat, is not Christianity, and to diverge from it (except that divergence shall be from some vital New Testament truth) is not, therefore, to diverge from Christianity itself.

It is by no means a new thing for the question of the value of creeds, as something to be imposed upon the members of the Christian church, to be called in question. They are needful, as we have said, as statements, but vast numbers regard them as superfluous, if not arbitrary, when used as a standard of a man's Christian allegiance. They may be held before him for his general guidance, while not imposed upon him for his absolute subscription and submission. That they do not secure unity in the church of Christ is manifest in those bodies where the imposition of the creed upon all its members is demanded. That they are perfect presentations of Christian truth, we presume no one will claim. That they are not, in many features, in need of modification and change to meet the expanding truth, few likewise question. New light, the old Puritan, John Robinson, said will break from the word of God. New light, in the method of starting truth if not in the mode of its conception, has broken from the word of God, and meanwhile the statements of the creeds remain rigid, dogmatic and defiant. Happy then is that denomination which, like our own, holds them for general direction, but does not impose them as a test of Christian adherence and loyalty. In the one case they have their use, and in the other they usurp the position which may be held only by the word of God itself.—Commonwealth.

## Finished.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might" . . . "the night cometh when no man can work."

"Go," said the heavenly keeper
Of the wheatfields, fair and wide,
"Go tell the tired reaper
That the time is eventide.
Tell him the sunset lingers
In rays aslant the ground,
And bind for his weary fingers
The sheaves he must leave unbound."

"I have watched him toil since morning,
And the work has been well done,
So quietly bear the warning,
The shadows are settling down."
So the merciful angel of Pity,
Who stood in the holy place,
Went out from the Heavenly City,
With a look of peace on his face.

The reaper paused on the meadows
Where the workers toil and sing,
For he heard in the darkening shadows
The sweep of the angel's wing.
He looked where the ripe grain glimmered
Unreaped on the fertile land;
"I cannot do it!" he murmured
As the angel stayed his hand.

Oh, sad hearts, nearly breaking,
The Master's time is best;
There is always a time of waking,
When a worker has earned his rest.
Tho' we lay him down with the sleepers,
While each one sadly grieves,
We know, to the God of the reapers,
The angels have borne his sheaves.

—R.

## Freedom of the Truth, for the Truth and by the Truth.

A gentleman remarked recently to us: "You cannot trust everybody with the truth." It would be hard, in our opinion, for fewer words to express more definitely the exact reverse of the fact. Instantly by contrast with this statement did the beauty and power of the Master's words appear: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." These two sentences represent attitudes of mind diverse by celestial diameters. The latter is Christly; the former, Jesuitical.

When a man says that "you cannot trust everybody with the truth," his words carry a subtle implication which seems to escape his notice. If everybody is not to be trusted with the truth, then there must be somebody who is infallible and knows when the truth is to be given and when it is to be withheld. The Inquisition involved papal infallibility. True, the tortures of the Inquisition had been applied for the suppression of thought hundreds of years before the dogma of Papal Infallibility was, in 1870, proclaimed; but such a claim for the ultimate authority in the Catholic church was tacitly presupposed in all the horrid work of the followers of Torquemada. The Vatican council only formulated the principle on which from the beginning the Inquisition had rested. It has always seemed to us that the church was a little late in formulating this dogma of infallibility. It was in 1517 that Raphael finished the renowned frescoes in the Vatican which celebrated the era of the glory of the Papacy and its victories over all adversaries. It was in this same year (1517) that Martin Luther nailed to the door of the church at Wittenburg his theses which shook Catholicism to its foundation. It was at the dawn of the modern epoch of liberality and progress, that Dante composed his epic of mediaevalism. It was under the riotous court of Charles II. that Milton in his great poem embalmed Puritanism. It was at the beginning of the present mighty outburst of science, that the Vatican Council announced the dogma of Papal Infallibility. It is, of course, customary to write the epitaph after death.

But, aside from the claim of infallibility made by those who are unwilling to trust the truth to everybody, there is danger that such a spirit will beget deception in those from whom it is proposed to withhold the truth. The intellect is incessantly active; is impelled forward by a natural curiosity; and seeks, like light, to penetrate all dark recesses. If it is hard to keep a secret, it is harder to keep a truth. Sooner than Cupid it will fly out of the window. The fact is that truth seems to diffuse itself, like electricity, in the atmosphere. How else shall we account for the co-discovery of the Calculus by Leibnitz and by Newton; the co discovery of the planet Neptune by Le Verrier and Adams; co-discovery of evolution by Darwin and Wallace; and many other such discoveries? Truth as well as murder will out. Now any attempt to curtail man's intellectual freedom, only leads to clandestine thinking. Thought cannot be suppressed. You had just as well try to put an iron band around the hand of God as to try to put man's intellect under a bushel. Man is a thinking animal. Think he must, as the fish swims or the bird flies. Is it not better that mind determine the limit of its own course, as his fin does for the fish and his wing does for the bird? We would have all thinking done in the sunlight and open air. Then what is noxious will be dispelled, what is pure can be seen. Better the bird that flies than the mole that burrows. To say nothing of the progress of truth, intellectual liberty is justified by the moral gain in frankness and sincerity. No matter how dark the thought which the child harbors at heart, what father would wish for it to be veiled by sweet speeches?

It is as sensible to insist that the body live in stifled air, as to compel the mind to live on attenuated truth. Truth is the soul's sustenance. There is stale truth or tradition, as there is stale bread. The truth of yesterday is tradition of today. That is to say, each soul must live the truth to know it, just as each man must digest his own food to derive strength therefrom. Each age interprets truth in its own terms, just as the Greeks, the Germans, and the English record truth in the language native to each race. The necessity to this arises from the very nature of truth. Some people seem to conceive of truth as a prize-package which can be handed from one man to another, but truth is individual, interior, a soul-process, character. Jesus said, "I am the truth."—The Baptist Argus.

## When the day is Done.

BY R. J. BURDETTE.

How quiet the house is at midnight! The people who talk and laugh and sing in it every day are asleep. I am not tired; but my pen is weary. It falls from my fingers, and I raise my head. I start to leave, and my eyes fall upon a little book lying on the floor. It is a little First Reader. He left it there this afternoon. I remember just how impatient I was because he could not read the simple little lesson—so easy a lesson—and I told him it was a waste of my time to teach him, and pushed him away from me I remember now. I see the flush come into the little tired face; the brave, cheerful look in his eyes; his mother's brave, patient cheeriness, struggling with his disappointment and pain. I see him lie down on the floor, and the little face bend over the troublesome lesson—a lesson so simple, so easy, any baby might read it. Then, after a short struggle alone, it has to be given up, and the baffled little soldier, with one more appealing look toward me, sighs, and goes away from the lesson he can not read to the play that comforts him. And there lies the little book just as he left it. Ah me! I could kneel down and kiss it now, as if it were alive and loving.

Why, what was my time worth to me today? What was there in the book I wanted to read half so precious to me as one cooing word from the prattling lips that quivered when I turned away? I hate the book I read. I will never look at it again. Were it the last book in the world I think I should burn it. All its gracious words are lies. I say to you, though all men praise the book, and though an hour ago I thought it excellent—I say to you, there is poison in its hateful pages. Why, what can I learn from books that baby lips can not teach me? If between my books and my boy I choose my books, why should not God leave me with my books—my hateful books!

But I was not harsh. I was only a little impatient. Because you see, his lesson was so easy so simple. Ah me, there were two of us trying to read this afternoon. There two easy, simple lessons. Mine was a very easy, simple, pleasant, loving one to learn. Just a line, just a little throb of patience, of gentleness, of love, that would have made my own heart glow and laugh and sing. The letters were so large and plain, the words so easy, and the sentences so short! And I? Oh pity me! I missed every word. I did not read one line aright. See, here is my copy now—all blurred and blistered with tears and heartache, all marred, mispelled and blotted. I am ashamed to show it to the Master. And yet I know that he will be patient with me; I know how loving and gentle he will be. How patiently and lovingly all these days he has been teaching me this simple lesson I failed upon to-day! Is my time, then, so much more precious than the Master's that I cannot teach the little lesson more than once?

Ah, friend, we waste time when we plait scourges for ourselves! These hurrying days—these busy, anxious, shrewd, ambitious times of ours—are wasted when they take our hearts away from patient gentleness, and give us fame for love and gold for kisses. Some day, then, when our hungry souls seek for bread, our selfish god will give us a stone. Life is not a deep, profound, perplexing problem. It is a simple, easy lesson, such as any child may read. You cannot find its solution in the ponderous tomes of the old fathers, the philosophers, the investigators, the theorists. It is not on your bookshelves. But in the warmest corner of the most unlettered heart it glows in letters that the blindest may read—a sweet, plain, simple, easy loving lesson. And when you have learned it, brother mine, the world will be better and happier.—Religious Herald.

## Moody's Own Methods.

William R. Moody, in writing for The Saturday Evening Post the life of his father, Dwight L. Moody, tells many good stories of the famous evangelist. In a recent article he says: "As a boy in Northfield he had achieved remarkable results in swelling the attendance at the Sunday School, and so, arguing from that, he conceived the idea that he could be of much value to Plymouth church as a recruiting agent Having come to this decision he hired a pew with the understanding that he was to fill it each Sunday. Like everything else he undertook, he fulfilled his commission with intense earnestness and enthusiasm. He did not wait for the young men to come to church, but he went after them, stopping them on street corners, visiting them in their lonely rooms, and even calling them out of saloons. It was altogether new and strange and the novelty of the whole work had an irresistible effect, with the consequence that in a short time young Moody was renting six pews, which he filled every Sunday with his strange and motely guests.

"There was a little mission on North Wells Street and he applied for a class. He was told that the sixteen teachers were amply able to instruct the twelve scholars, but if he would provide his own class they would be very glad to have them. That was just what Mr. Moody wanted. Next Sunday there was a sensation. Young Moody opened the door and led in a procession of eighteen little 'hoodlums' whom he had gathered from the streets."