THE best idea of a Sabbath-day's journey is obtained when one tries to run through a Sunday newspaper.—Lowell Courier.



# "August Flower"

Miss C. G. McCLAVE, School-teacher, 753 Park Place, Elmira, N. Y. "This Spring while away from home teaching my first term in a country school I was perfectly wretched with that human agony called dyspepsia. After dieting for two weeks and getting no better, a friend wrote me, suggesting that I take August Flower. The very next day I purchased a bottle. I am delighted to say that August Flower helped me so that I have quite recovered from my indisposition."



# GOD IN THE CENTURIES.

## "Consider the Years of Many Generations."

### Time is Only a Piece of Eternity—Chronology Engaged in Dividing Up a Portion of Eternity—Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage's New Year's Sermon.

Rev. Dr. Talmage Sunday morning appropriately took for the subject of his New Year's day sermon "The Chronology of the Bible, or God Among the Centuries."

The text chosen was Deuteronomy xxxii, 7. "Consider the years of many generations."

At 12 o'clock last night, while so many good people were watching, an old friend passed out of our homes and a stranger entered. The old friend making valedictory was 1892; the stranger arriving is 1893. The old friend was garrulous with the occurrences of many days, but the stranger put his finger over his lip and said nothing and seemed charged with many secrets and mysteries. I did not see either the departure or the arrival, but was sound asleep, thinking that was for me the best way to be wide awake now. Good-by, 1892! Welcome, 1893!

As an army is divided into brigades and regiments and companies, and they observe this order in their march and their tread is majestic, so the time of the world's existence is divided into an army divinely commanded; the eras are the brigades, the centuries are the regiments, and the years are the companies. Forward into the eternity past, out of the eternity to come! Forward is the command, and nothing can halt them, even though the world should die. While obeying my text, "Consider the years of many generations," I propose to speak of the "Chronology of the Bible, or God Among the Centuries."

We make a distinction between time and eternity, but time is only a piece of eternity, and chronology has been engaged in the divine work of dividing up this portion of eternity that we call time into compartments and putting events in their right compartment. It is as much an injustice against the past to wrongly arrange its events as it would be an injustice if, through neglect of chronological accuracy, it should in the far distant future be said that America was discovered in 1776, and the declaration of independence was signed in 1492, and Washington born on the 22d of March, and the civil war of the United States was fought in 1840.

As God puts all the events of time in the right place, let us be careful that we do not put them in the wrong place. The chronology of the Bible takes six steps, but they are steps so long it makes us hold our breath as we watch the movement. From Adam to Abraham. From Abraham to the exodus out of Egypt. From the exodus to the foundation Solomon's temple. From the foundation of Solomon's temple to the destruction of that temple. From the destruction of the temple to the return from Babylonish captivity. From Babylonish captivity to the birth of Christ.

Chronology takes pen and pencil, and calling astronomy and history to help says: "Let us fix one event from which to calculate everything. Let it be a star, the Bethlehem star, the Christmas star." And from that we go back and see the world was created 4,004 years before Christ; the deluge came 2,348 years before Christ; the exodus out of Egypt occurred 1,491 years before Christ, and Solomon's temple was destroyed 586 years before Christ.

Chronology enters the first chapter of Genesis and says the day mentioned there is not a day of twenty-four hours, but of ages, the word there translated as "day" in other places meaning ages, and so the Bible account of the creation and the geologists' account of the creation are completely harmonious. Chronology enters the book of Daniel and says that the words "time and a half" mean a year and a half.

Chronology enters at another point and shows us that the seasons of the year were then only two—summer and winter. We find that the Bible year was 360 days instead of 365; that the day was calculated from 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock at night; that the night was divided into four watches—namely, the late watch, the midnight, the cock crowing the early watch. The clock and watch were invented so long after the world began their mission that the day was not very sharply divided in Bible times. Ahaz had a sundial, or a flight of stairs with a column at the top, and the shadow which that column threw on the steps beneath indicated the hour, the shadow lengthening or withdrawing from step to step.

But the events of life and the events of the world moved so slowly for the most part in Bible times that they had no need of such time pieces as we stand on our mantels or carry in our pockets in an age when a man may have a half dozen or a dozen engagements for one day and needs to know the exact minute for each one of them. The earth itself in Bible times was the chief time piece, and it turned once on its axis and that was a day, and once around the sun and that was a year.

It was not until the Fourteenth century that the almanac was born, the almanac that we toss carelessly about, not realizing that it took the accumulated ingenuity of more than 5,000 years to make one. Chronology had to bring into its service the monuments of Egypt, and the cylinders of Assyria, and the bricks of Babylon, and the pottery of Nineveh, and the medals struck at Antioch for the battle of Actium, and all the hieroglyphics that could be deciphered, and had to go into the extremely delicate business of asking the ages of Adam and Seth and Enoch and Methuselah, who after their 300th year wanted to be thought young.

I think it must have been in recognition of the stupendous work of making an almanac that all the days of the week are named after the gods. Sunday, after the sun, which was of old worshiped as a god. Monday, after the moon, which was also worshiped as a god. Tuesday, after Tuesco, the god of war. Wednesday, after Woden, the chief god of the Scandinavians. Thursday, after Thor, the god of thunder. Friday, after Frea, the goddess of marriage. And Saturday, after Saturn. The old Bible year began with the 25th of March. Not until 1752 did the first of the month of January get the honor in legal documents in England of being called the first day of the year.

Improvements all along have been made in chronology until the calendar, and the almanac, and the clock, and the watch seem to have reached perfection, and all the nations of Christendom have similarity of time calculations and have adopted what is called "new style," except Russia, which keeps what is called the "old style," and is twelve days different, so that, waiting from there, if you wish to be accurate, you date your letter January 1 and January 13, or December 10 and December 22. It is something to thank God for that the modes are so complete for calculating the cycles, the centuries, the decades, the years, the months, the days, the hours, the seconds.

Think of making appointments as in the Bible days for the time of the new moon. Think of making one of the watches of the night in Bible times a rooster crowing. The Bible says, "Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice." "If the Master cometh at the cockcrowing," and that was the way the midnight watch was indicated. The crowing of that barnyard bird has always been most uncertain. The crowing is at the lowest temperature of the night, and the amount of dew and the direction of the wind may bring the lowest temperature at 11 o'clock at night or 2 o'clock in the morning, and at any one of six hours. Just before a rain the crowing of chanticleer in the night is almost perpetual.

Compare these modes of marking time with our modes of marking time, when 12 o'clock is 12 o'clock, and 6 o'clock is 6 o'clock, and 10 o'clock is 10 o'clock, and independent of all weathers, and then thank God that you live now. But notwithstanding all the imperfect modes of marking hours or years or centuries Bible chronology never trips up, never falters, never contradicts itself, and here is one of the best arguments for the authenticity of the Scriptures.

If you can prove an alibi in the courts, and you can prove beyond doubt that you were in some particular place at the time you were charged with doing or saying something in quite another place, you gain the victory, and infidelity has tried to prove an alibi by contending that events and circumstances in the Bible ascribed to certain times must have taken place at some other time, if they took place at all. But this book's chronology has never been caught at fault. It has been proved that when the Hebrews went into Egypt there were only seventy of them, and that when they came out there were 3,000,000 of them.

"Now," says infidelity, with a guffaw that it can not suppress, "what an absurdity! They went down into Egypt seventy and came out 3,000,000. That is a falsehood on the face of it. Nations do not increase in that ratio." But, my skeptical friend, hold a moment. The Bible says the Jews were 430 years in Egypt, and that explains the increase from seventy persons to 3,000,000, for it is no more, but rather less than the ordinary increase of nations. The pilgrim fathers came to America in the Mayflower, one small shipload of passengers, less than 300 years ago, and now we have a nation of 60,000,000. Where, then is so-called impossibility that the seventy Jews who went into Egypt in 430 years became 3,000,000? Infidelity wrong and Bible chronology right.

Now stop and reflect. Why is it that this sublime subject of Bible chronology has been so neglected, and that the most of you have never given ten minutes to the consideration of it, and that this is the first sermon ever preached on this stupendous and overwhelming theme? We have stood by the half day or the whole day at grand reviews and seen armies pass.

Again and again and again on the Champs Elysees Frenchmen by the hundreds of thousands have stood and watched the bannered armies go by, and the huzza has been three miles long and until the populace were so hoarse they could huzza no longer. Again and again and again the Germans by hundreds of thousands have stood on the palaced and statued Unter den Linden, Berlin, and strewn garlands under the feet of uniformed hosts led on by Von Moltke or Blucher or Frederick the Great.

When Wellington and Ponsonby and the Scots Grays came back from Waterloo, or Wolseley from Egypt, or Marlborough from Blenheim, what military processions through Regent street and along by the palace of London and over the bridges of the Thames! What almost interminable lines of military on the streets of our American capitals, while mayors and governors and presidents, with uncovered heads, looked on! But put all those grand reviews together, and they are tame compared with the review which on this New Year's day you from the pew and I from the pulpit witness.

Hear them pass in chronological order—all the years before the flood; all the years since the flood; decades abreast; centuries abreast; epochs abreast; millenniums abreast; Egyptian civilization, Babylonian populations, Asyrian dominions; armies of Persian, Grecian, Peloponnesian and Roman wars; Byzantine empire, Saracenic hosts, crusaders of the first, the second, third and the last avalanche of men; dark ages in somber epaulets and brighter ages with shields of silver and helmets of gold; Italy, Spain, France, Russia, Germany, England and America, past and present; dynasties, feudal domains, despotisms, monarchies, republics, ages on ages, ages on ages, passing to-day in a chronological review, until one has no more power to look upon the advancing columns, now brilliant, now squalid, now garlanded with peace, now crimson with slaughter, how horrid with ghastliness, now radiant with love and joy.

This chronological study affords, among other practical thoughts, especially two—the one encouraging to the last degree and the other startling. The encouraging thought is that the main drift of the centuries has been toward betterment, with only here and there a stout reversal. Grecian civilization was a vast improvement on Egyptian civilization, and Roman civilization a vast improvement on Grecian civilization, and Christian civilization is a vast improvement on Roman civilization.

What was the boasted age of Pericles compared with the age of Longfellow and Tennyson? What was Queen Elizabeth as a specimen of moral womanhood compared with Queen Victoria? What were the cruel warriors of olden times compared with the most distinguished warriors of the last half century, all of them as much distinguished for kindness and good morals as for prowess—the two military leaders of our civil war on northern and southern side communicant members of Christian churches, and their home life as pure as their public life?

Nothing impresses me in this chronological review more than the fact that the regiments of years are better and better regiments as the troops move on. I thank God that you and I were not born any sooner than we were born. How could we have endured the disaster of being born in the eighteenth or seventeenth or sixteenth century? Glad am I that we are in the regiment now passing the reviewing stand, and that our children will pass the stand in a still better regiment. God did not build this world for a slaughter house or a den of infamy.

A good deal of cleaning house will be necessary before this world becomes as clean and sweet as it ought to be, but the brooms and the scrubbing brushes, and the upholsterers and plumbers are already busy, and when the world gets fixed up, as it will be, if Adam and Eve ever visit it, as I expect they will, they will say to each other: "Well, this beats paradise when we lived there, and the pears and the plums are better than we plucked from the first trees, and wardrobes are more complete, and the climate is better.

Since I settled in my own mind the fact that God was stronger than the devil I have never lost faith in the emparadisation of this planet. With the exception of a retrogression in the Dark Ages, the movement of the world has been on and on, and up and up, and I have two jubilant hosannas—one for the closing year and the other for the new year.

But the other thought coming out of this subject is that Biblical chronology, and indeed all chronology, is urging the world to more punctuality and immediateness. What an unsatisfactory and indefinite thing it must have been for two business men in the time of Ahaz to make an appointment, saying; "We will settle that business matter to-morrow when the shadow on the dial of Ahaz reaches the tenth step from the top," or "I will meet you in the street called Straight in Damascus in the time of the new moon," or when asked in a courtroom what time an occurrence took place should answer, "It was during the time of the latter rain," or "It was at the time of the third crowing of the barnyard!"

You and I remember when ministers of the gospel in the country, giving out a notice of an evening service, instead of saying at 6 or 7 or 8 o'clock, would say, "The service will begin at early candle light." Thank God for chronological achievements which have ushered in calendars and almanacs and clocks and watches, and at so cheap a rate all may possess them! Chronology, beginning by appreciating the value of years and the value of days, has kept on until it cries out, "Man, immortal; woman, immortal; look out for that minute; look out for that second!"

We talk a great deal about the value of time, but will never fully appreciate its value until the last fragment of it has passed out of our possession forever. The greatest fraud a man can commit is to rob another of his time. Hear it, ye laggards, and repent! All the fingers of chronology point to punctuality as one of the graces. The minister or the lecturer or business man who comes to his place ten minutes after the appointed time commits a crime the enormity of which can only be estimated by multiplying the number of persons present by ten. If the engagement be made with five persons, he has stolen fifty minutes, for he is ten minutes too late, and he has robbed each of the five persons of ten minutes apiece, and ten times five are fifty.

If there be 500 persons present and he be ten minutes too late, he has committed a robbery of 5,000 minutes, for ten times 500 are 5,000, and 5,000 minutes are eighty-three hours, which make more than three days. The thief of dry goods, the thief of bank bills, is not half so bad as the thief of time.

Dr. Rush, the greatest and busiest physician of his day, appreciated the value of time, and when asked how he had been able to gather so much information for his books and lectures he replied: "I have been able to do it by economizing my time. I have not spent one hour in amusement in thirty years." And taking a blank book from his pocket, he said, "I fill a book like this every week with thoughts that occur to me and facts collected in the rooms of my patients."

But do not let us get an impression from chronology that because the years of time have been so long in procession they are to go on forever. Matter is not eternal. No, no! If you watch half a day, or a whole day, or two days, as I once did, to see a military procession you remember the last brigade, and the last regiment, and the last company finally passed on, and as we rose to go we said to each other, "It is all over."

So this mighty procession of earthly years will terminate. Just when I have no power to prognosticate, but science confirms the Bible prophecy that the earth can not always last. Indeed there has been a fatality of worlds. The moon is merely the corpse of what it once was, and scientists have again and again gone up in their observatories to attend the deathbed of dying worlds and have seen them cremated. So I am certain, both from the Word of God and science, that the world's chronology will sooner or later come to its last chapter.

The final century will arrive and pass on, and then will come the final decade, and then the final year, and the final month, and the final day. The last spring will swing its censer of apple blossoms and the last winter bank its snows. The last sunset will burn like Moscow and the last morning radiate the hills. The clocks will strike their last hour, and the watches will tick their last second. No incendiaries will be needed to run hither and yon with torches to set the world on fire.

Chemistry teaches us that there is a very inflammable element in water. While oxygen makes up a part of the water, the other part of the water is hydrogen, and that is very combustible. The oxygen drawn out from the water, the inflammable hydrogen will put instantly into conflagration the Hudsons and Savannahs and Mississippis and Rhines and Urals and Danubes, and Atlantic and Pacific and Indian and Mediterranean seas. And then the angel of God, descending from the throne, might put one foot on the surf of the sea and the other on the beach and cry to the four winds of Heaven, "Time was, but time shall be no longer!" Yet, found in Christ, pardoned and sanctified, we shall welcome the day with more gladness than you ever welcomed a Christmas or New Year's morn.

### What Holds Churches Together.

In speaking of church union, the Independent remarks: "We are fully convinced that spiritual oneness is the only force that can bring churches together. What separates them is what is formal—intellectual or administrative differences, or theology or polity. The churches have already well-nigh learned that intellectual differences should not separate them. We are slower to learn that it is not polity that makes a church."



## JOLLY THOUGHTS.

A DIVORCE lawyer likes a domestic broil done brown.—Binghamton Republican.

THE office boy who was taken on trial was let go because he proved too much of one.—Puck.

MANY a man has been betrayed by a kiss after taking a drink of whisky.—Binghamton Republican.

MUDGE—"Thompson called me an idiot." Yabsley—"You needn't mind that. Thompson always does exaggerate more or less."—Indianapolis Journal.

THE HARD PART.—Proprietor—"Did you let the lady know it was no trouble to show your wares?" New Clerk—"Yes, sir. I told her that selling them was where the rub came in."—Life.

"I KNOW my feet are to stand on," said a crabbed individual in a crowded cable car to his neighbor, "but if it is just the same to you I would like that privilege for myself exclusively. Will you please get down on the floor?"

LITTLE TOMMY—"What is that man cutting the trees for, papa?" Tommy's Papa—"He is pruning them, my boy." Little Tommy—"How soon will the prunes be ripe?"—Philadelphia Record.



THE snakes at the Zoo have ceased to argue with the turtles as to their relative merits. The snakes found that they hadn't a leg to stand on.—Philadelphia Record.



"BUT, Herr Pimperl, what do you mean by taking a river bath at this temperature?" "Well, you see, I haven't used up all my season tickets."—Fliegende Blatter.

"TO ERR is human," and to stick to it is more so.—Galveston News.

IT is said that care killed the cat. One cannot use too much care in dealing with one's neighbor's feline favorite.—Alton Times.

"TOM," she whispered, "Suppose I should die." "There's no suppose about it," responded Tom, you've got to—some day."—Life.

HE—"If you were not so tall I'd propose to you." She—"If you did, you'd see how short I could be."—Harper's Bazar.

ALUMINIUM buggies are now in the market. They should find special favor, as they will be light even on the darkest night.—Inter Ocean.

IF cats could only hold their back-fence carnivals in the daytime they wouldn't mew till late nights so.—Rochester Democrat.

SOME of the most disappointed people in the judgment will be those who could have had more religion, but thought they had enough.—Ram's Horn.

WE suppose a sailor comes to be a "tar" as the result of the pitch of his vessel.

WHEN does a man really steal? When he robs a house, or when he makes up his mind that he will?—Ram's Horn.

"Well," said the impatient street-car conductor to the corpulent party trying to catch the car, "come ahead or else go afoot."—Lampoon.

PHILANTHROPIST—"Why do you not let whisky alone?" Hungry Higgins—"I wouldn't have no excuse for being poor if I did."—Indianapolis Journal.

MRS. TUTTLE—"What made Mrs. Snapper give that old man her seat in the car?" Mrs. Wiseacre—"Because he said: 'Pardon me, miss,' when he accidentally stepped on her dress."—Inter Ocean.

MINNIE—"That horrid Shah of Persia has four hundred wives, so the missionary said." Mamie—"I suppose that makes him belong to the four hundred, doesn't it?"—Indianapolis Journal.



THERE isn't a poor man in the world who would be willing to carry a millionaire's load for the pay he gets.—Ram's Horn.



VISITING a church fair is like going into the highways and buy ways.—Lowell Courier.



A. N. K., F. 1429