

A Period of Pestilence Predicted.

A time of pestilence, famine and great calamity generally is predicted in the near future, between now and 1880, due to planetary influence. The four great planets of the system, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, have a mighty influence in the solar economy, even though they revolve at immense distances from the centre of the scheme. When one or more of these planets are at their nearest point to the sun, great disturbances are sure to take place from the increased attraction of the masses upon each other. Soon, however, the four great planets reach their perihelion, or nearest point to the sun, very nearly together. They will be at their nearest approach in the year 1880, or soon after, and the influence of their unwelcome union may continue for several years. Such a conjunction of forces has not occurred since the Christian era.

A careful observer announces that the perihelia of the great planets took place at the same time in the sixth and also in the sixteenth century, and that the epochs were marked by the occurrence of the most pestilential periods on record. Every sensible person will understand that when Jupiter, a planet whose volume is thirteen hundred times that of the earth, reaches its perihelion, being then forty-six millions of miles nearer the sun than when in aphelion, the increased attraction must create a commotion in the sun's seething mass, as well as in the chaotic elements of the planets. It is just as certain that our atmosphere and temperature will be disturbed, and it is feared that the disturbance will be unfavorable to health and prosperity.

It will, at least, be well for every one to put his house in order and be prepared for the worst. Every one should try to live in accordance with the laws of health, that the physical system may be strengthened—deal honestly, walk uprightly.—*Lewiston Daily Journal.*

The Book of Job.

The book of Job is one of the grandest in all literature, and is the oldest in the Bible, (perhaps, excepting Genesis), and therefore, in the world. Many have assigned the authorship of the book of Job to Moses; others, to Solomon, Hezekiah, or Elihu. But Eusebius fixes the time of Job's life and trials at two ages before Moses; that is, about the time of Isaac—1800 years before Christ, and 600 before the Deluge; and the style is not that of Moses. The style of thought, imagery and manners; the language, full of Syriac and Arabic expressions, is such as we would expect from an Arabian emir—Job himself. In his speeches, Job shows he had the ability to compose such a work. It must have been written before the Mosaic law, as the religion spoken of was evidently patriarchal, as was Job's length of life—210 years, and he alludes only to the earliest form of idolatry—the worship of the sun, moon and heavenly bodies; riches are reckoned by cattle. There is no allusion to the Exodus, and the miracles preceding it, and he speaks of the most ancient writing, sculpture. That it is inspired appears from the fact that the apostle Paul quotes from it in 1 Cor. iii: 19, with the formula, "It is written;" also our Savior in Matt. xxiv: 28, and James v: 11, and iv: 10; Peter v: 6. The whole book is a discussion of the problem of the sufferings of the righteous, and to show the effect of a calamity upon a truly religious spirit.

The book is divided into five parts; I. The historical facts; II. The discussion between Job and his three friends, who take the view that all affliction is for punishment; III. Job's discussion with Elihu; IV. "The Theophany,"—that is, God's speaking out of the storm; V. The successful termination. The present lesson is a

part of the speech of Elihu, who takes the more advanced view; that affliction comes to the best of men to purify and correct, and is permitted by God for their good to discipline them, and lead them nearer to Him.

Elihu was a son of Barachel, a descendant of Buz, who was a nephew of Abraham. His name signifies, "He is my God." Buz and Uz were the sons of Nahor, Abraham's brother.

The Moral Story.

"I haven't anything to do," said Ned, gravely, as he sauntered down the walk leading to the grape-vine arbor. Ned had been having a furious game of tag with Christopher Lee, but Christopher had gone home now, and Ned looked very much aggrieved as he took hold of the edge of the hammock wherein was Aunt Ellen reading, and began to swing it back and forth.

Aunt Ellen closed her book, and reached her pretty hand out to meet Ned's.

"Poor boy," she said, "you do look forlorn enough. Don't you want me to tell you a story?"

"Will you, truly?"

"If you say so, yes. Where's Sadie?"

"Sewing a sheet for mother. She's got to do twice as much as her middle finger before she goes to play."

"Well ask mother if she can't come out here to sew and listen at the same time."

Off ran Ned to obtain the desired permission, and Aunt Ellen lay looking up at the grape-vines, wondering what she should say to those children. Sadie and Ned came back together in triumph.

"Now I wonder if I can't make room for you up here; it will be so much pleasanter. Give me your hand Sadie; that's right. Now we will sit three in a row, while I watch Ned listen and Sadie sew."

"Oh, Aunt Ellen," shrieked Ned, in delight, "what a rhyme! I could make better poetry than that."

"I don't doubt it. Now are we ready? Once there was a poor fisherman who lived down by the sea. Poor, did I say? No, he would have been poor but for one thing. Long, long ago, when he was a tiny baby, he had a gift from a great king who loved him very much—a gift which he had kept all these years, and which he had valued very highly now that he had come to the years of discretion. It was a long string of priceless pearls—so long that he had never been able to count them all. Every night he told off 24 as he sat in the door of his cottage, and they slipped the chain and disappeared with those already counted."

"One night as he sat counting his pearls, an old man, plodding along by the sea-shore stopped and spoke to him."

"Friend," said he, "what have you here?" and for answer the fisherman held up his string of pearls. "That is a priceless chain," said the old man. "Where is the other end of it?"

"The fisherman turned to lift it up, and lo! not a pearl was to be seen on it; the string lay in a long, bare coil about his feet. Could you believe a man would be so careless? He had never stopped to see where the end of the coil lay as he counted off, one by one, and the waves washing up to his door, had carried them all out to sea."

"Wasn't there one left?" asked Sadie, forgetting to sew.

"Yes, those that were still uncounted, he had, but, oh, how he regretted losing all the beautiful chain! He felt poorer now than ever, for he knew that he could never hope to receive another such gift, and he resolved to watch carefully the pearls still left him, to see that not one of those should slip away."

"Aunt Ellen, said Ned, at this point, 'I believe that is a moral story.'"

"Well," said Aunt Ellen; "don't

you like moral stories?"

Ned shook his head decidedly. "If you're coming to the moral now, I think I'll go."

And Ned began to turn summer-saults in the freshly cut grass, whistling very loudly, so that he might not hear the "moral" which he felt sure Aunt Ellen was telling to Sadie.

But Ned was not so thoughtless a boy as he liked to appear, and I think he traced the moral out in his own mind, and in heart echoed Sadie's words as she folded up her sewing to carry in; "Aunt Ellen, I'm going to be very, very careful to watch where my pearls go as they slip down the string. Thank you for the story." And here Ned was quite willing to echo with his lips as well. "Thank you, Aunt Ellen."—*Little Star.*

Hints to Writers.

William Cullen Bryant once gave the following sensible advice to a young man who had offered him an article for the *Evening Post*:

"My young friend, I observe that you have used several French expressions in your letter. I think, if you will study the English language, that you will find it capable of expressing all the ideas that you may have. I have always found it so, and in all that I have written I do not recall an instance where I was tempted to use a foreign word, but that on searching, I have found a better one in my own language."

"Be simple, unaffected; be honest in your writing. Never use a long word when a short one will do as well."

"Call a spade by its name, not a well known oblong instrument of manual labor; let a home be a home not a residence; a place, not a locality; and so on the rest. When a short word will do, you always lose by a long one. You lose in clearness; you lose in honest expression of meaning; and, in the estimation of all men who are capable of judging, you lose in reputation for ability."

"The only way to shine, even in this false world, is to be modest and unassuming. Falsehood may be a thick crust, but in the course of time truth will find a place to break through. Elegance of language may not be in the power of us all, but simplicity and straightforwardness are."

Write much as you would speak, and as you think. If with your inferior, speak no coarser than usual; if with your superior speak no finer. Be what you say, and within the rules of prudence. No one ever was a gainer by singularity of words or in pronunciation. The truly wise will so speak that no one will observe how he speaks. A man may show great knowledge of chemistry by carrying bladders of strange gases to breathe; but one will enjoy better health, and find more time for business, who lives on common air."

Sidney Smith once remarked: after you have written an article, take your pen and strike out half the words and you will be surprised to see how much stronger it is."

A Good Old Age.

After all, what particular advantage does a man gain by living to what is termed a good old age? In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, he finds that he has lived too long. Many young men have had their day, and that it is time for them to make way for those who are pressing on their heels. If the old men can be thrust aside, well and good; if they decline to be removed from their places before death takes them, the chances are that they are regarded as nuisances, and their transmutation is spoken of as a thing desired. On his side, the old man is not blind. If he is a wealthy man, in most instances he is treated civilly because people hope to wheedle him out of some of his property. He has the discrimination to detect that he is

laughed at, regarded as being part of the past, put upon one side as if he were nothing, petted as if he were a child or a person of weak intellect, and in other ways, possibly unintentionally, mortified and insulted. Can it be wondered at that he often makes peevish attempts to resent the treatment which he receives; that he is induced to take misanthropical views of life and his condition? Verily, man must have a wonderful mental and physical constitution if he can remain cheerful, hearty, frank and good-natured during the period in which he awaits the writing of finis to the chapter of his life. Some manage to do this of course but they are brave souls, who are largely favored by exceptional circumstances. It is to be feared that a large portion of humanity never appears to so little advantage as during the evening of life.

Punctuality.

In establishing a character, nothing is more important than the punctual fulfillment of engagements. A promise once made, should be faithfully adhered to, it matters little at what cost.

The highest praise that can be said of a man, is that "his word is as good as his bond," and having gained this reputation, he never lacks for friends or assistance when required. We are led to these remarks in view of the fact that on this coast there is a sad lack of punctuality in keeping appointments, or in complying with terms of contracts.

A young man gives his word that he will be present at a certain time, or that on a given day he will meet his obligation, but when the time comes he scarcely gives the matter a thought, and when questioned as to his failure, gives some petty excuse, that in itself affords conclusive evidence that he has little or no regard for his word.

The young man or woman who starts out in life in this careless, slipshod way, is not likely to attain any considerable eminence, and the chances are that in nine cases out of ten they will come to be regarded as altogether unreliable.

If this fits the reader—be it man or woman—commence now by turning over a new leaf, and whenever you give your word regard that word as a bond.—*Ex.*

Trust in Humanity.

This trust of one in another is a beautiful one. It holds the sweet chrism of heart peace. The broad, generous trust in all around you—the true, hearty, whole-souled friendship that admits of no suspicion, though so often met and repaid only by falsity and deception—brings its own reward, in the repose of mind, it keeps the soul young and fresh after the years of youth and freshness have faded.

To doubt and distrust the world is to rob life of all that is loveliest and best and most worth living for, is to narrow your views and fetter the expansion of mind and soul. In your skepticism you may resent honest friendship and true love through the fear that behind it is hid a false motive that would work you ill. In this you may save yourself sometimes deception, but only to bring you perpetual unrest and disquiet.

We are all creatures of the self-same God—and with all the villainess, all the sinfulness and falseness of which humanity is capable—there is still much that is good, true and beautiful to be loved, trusted and admired. There is, amid the great rabble of wrong-doers, many a heart of unspotted truthfulness, and many a hand that is outstretched in good, honest, sincere friendship. We generally find what we most diligently seek, and if we look for nothing but falsity, we find that, and if we strive to overlook the false, we see only

what is good and true, will find enough of that to make our spirits sweet and our hearts peaceful—enough to help us to the performance of kind acts, that may be set down to our commendation among the recorded deeds of life.

Many a heart has been broken, and life wasted under the sting—suspicion, or merged from a pure truthfulness into a foul falsity under the withering influence—doubt and distrust. Though your generous confidence may sometimes be betrayed, yet that, were infinitely better than to accuse the innocent, or mar your heart repose by distrust. And, too, if you trust and be deceived, you will have the consolation of having been true yourself, of having your heart unscathed by falsehood.

There is many a bitter drop in the wine of life—many a thorn among the fairest roses that bloom along life's way, but often they are of our own distilling and our own planting. And distrust is a drop that will embitter your whole being, and a thorn that will rankle in your flesh for a lifetime.—*Temperance Messenger.*

Down in a Silver Mine.

Those who have never personally inspected the lower levels of our mines may obtain some idea of the degree of heat to be found therein by visiting the Savage works at the change of shifts. The men—packed together as close as they can stand—are popped up out of the shaft all steaming hot. As the men land and separate, each carries with him his little cloud of vapor. As this passes off, the man is seen to be naked from the waist up, his skin as wet as though he had just been lifted out of a pool of water. The men bring up with them, besides the steam, an amount of heat that can be felt by the spectator as they pass. All this is at the top of the shaft, where it is considered quite cool; what, then, must it be hundreds of feet below, where the men started from—down where the water stands 157 degrees Fahrenheit. Down there no storm is seen—it is too hot. It is only when the hot, moist air, coming from the lower regions, strikes the cool air at the top of the shaft, that it takes the form of steam. Down there where the men came from you must keep your hands off the pump columns and the pipes, and if you pick up any iron tool, you will at once put it down without being told to do so. Down there they handle things with gloves on, or wrap rags around the drills they are guiding, and iron apparatus they are moving; and down there, too, you will learn to keep your mouth shut after you have drawn a few mouthfuls of hot air into your lungs. Per-spire? It is no name for it. You are like a sponge that is being squeezed.—*Nevada Paper.*

Old Practices.

In some parts of Scotland, in former times the plow used to be drawn by four horses abreast, and required the attendance of three men. The business of one man was to drive. For that purpose he placed himself between the middle horses, with his face toward the plough, to guide it straight and in this position he stepped backward with the reins in his hands. Another walked behind the horses with a cleeked staff, which he fastened in the front of the team, and by means of it regulated the depth of the furrow, by raising or lowering the plow, as occasion required. The plowman followed with a hold of the stilt; and in this formidable and ludicrous manner they repeated their attacks on the soil. In harvest a basket machine was placed on horseback for carrying home the grain, and persons were employed on each side with forks to keep it in a proper poise. It is said that this practice is yet to be met with in Galloway.—*Ex.*

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