

calities where the missionaries go to hold meetings and preach or to visit friends either in or out of the Church, that prejudiced and wicked persons who do not possess sufficient regard for law and the rights of other people combine to disturb and break up meetings, and threaten, and sometimes commit, other lawless acts of a serious nature. Ordinarily the Elders pay little heed to threats made against them, as they are aware that they are committing no wrong in preaching the Gospel, but are discharging a solemn duty, and are legally and rightfully entitled to protection therein. Their message, too, is of that peaceful nature that where it is listened to there seldom is any trouble even from those opposed to them in their views. But among people actuated by bigotry and fanaticism, and whose prejudices are stirred up through misrepresentation, it is different, and occasionally there is danger of trouble that may be serious in its results.

When there is anything of the latter kind in view, it is the imperative duty of the missionaries, in the interest of peace and good order, to take steps to avoid unpleasantness, even if it be necessary for them to withdraw from the district to attain the desired end. Their calling does not require them to crowd themselves upon the people in defiance of the latter's wishes. They are to use diligence in presenting their message in every city, town and village where they enter. If the people do not want it, the responsibility for that choice is their own; if they threaten or use violence in rejecting that message, it is wrong to seek to force it upon them. The Lord has commanded His servants, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another;" and says: "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when you depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them." In places where the people are merely indifferent and take no active steps of opposition they are not persecutors, and should be dealt with leniently and patiently. But where they resort to violence to drive the Elders out, the command of the Lord as quoted is strictly applicable and ought to be observed; nor should the missionaries wait to be actually driven out any more than they should retire when there is no occasion to do so. So far as the admonition to be wise and harmless is concerned, it is not wisdom, when there is prospect of violence, to invite its commission; and when lawlessness is threatened it is not being harmless to aid by any rash step in bringing it to pass. Due caution should be exercised and every reasonable and consistent means be taken to avoid contention and disturbance. That is the spirit of the Gospel; a disposition to court danger and invite contention is from an opposite source.

As the missionaries go out to various nations they witness a spirit of great indifference among the people for their eternal welfare, and comparatively few evince a willingness to obey the plan of salvation. This is, however, no cause of discouragement to those who are entrusted with the keys of preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. It is an indication that the people have turned to ungodli-

ness. The disciples of the Lord who are called to deliver the divine message wish that, for their own welfare, men and women would listen to and embrace the truth. But each soul has its free agency, and must make its own choice; it must also abide the result. In the days of Noah the world did not believe his testimony concerning the coming deluge, but this unbelief did not stay the waters. The few who gave heed to the divine call were all that were saved from the disaster. As it was in the days of Noah so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man. Those who will not heed the warning call must share in the judgments through their own neglect to take advantage of the opportunity for salvation.

The rejection of the testimony of the Elders by many of the Gentile nations today is a fulfilment of prophecy, and is one of the most notable signs of the latter times. Is is an incontrovertible witness of the near approach of the hour of God's judgment upon the world, for after the testimony of His servants there will come, upon those who will not receive His word, the testimony of His wrath, shown in the thunders and the lightnings, the earthquakes, storms, pestilences and famines, and commotions in the heavens and on earth. And while the missionaries are called as laborers in the harvest-field, let them preach in word and deed the peaceable things of the kingdom, warning the people to seek in the Gospel salvation from the judgments to come, and leaving the result in the hands of the Almighty.

THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS.

The question has recently been discussed, we understand, by theological students as to the correct understanding of Matthew xii. 40, where the Savior declares that He should remain three days and three nights in the grave. The statement seems to be irreconcilable with the accepted view that the crucifixion occurred on Friday and the resurrection the following Sunday morning.

The point raised is one that has puzzled commentators in all ages and seems to be one of the most difficult to decide, owing to a lack of detailed accounts of the events of the life of the Lord. The generally accepted explanation is that the Jews did not have any word to express a day of twenty-four hours as distinguished from a day proper. Any part of the time from sunset till next sunset was therefore referred to as "day and night," and to say that a thing happened after three days and three nights was equivalent to our expression, after three days, or, on the third day. This explanation has been considered satisfactory by able scholars in all ages, notwithstanding the objections to the authenticity of the gospels raised on account of the seeming contradiction.

Other views, however, have also found able defenders. An eminent divine, Rev. T. H. Cleland thinks all difficulties regarding the accounts given of the resurrection can be solved on the supposition that Christ was crucified on a Wednesday instead of Friday. He maintains that the arrival

of the Lord at Bethany must have taken place on a Friday, so as not to have to travel on the Sabbath. Six days He spent in and around Jerusalem before the crucifixion, which would fix that event on a Wednesday. The paschal lamb was eaten on the 14th of Nisan. In the night Jesus was arrested and the following day, convicted and executed, this still being the 14th because the Jewish day commenced at sunset and lasted till next sunset. The 15th of Nisan was the greatest Sabbath in the year, the feast of unleavened bread, and it could fall on any day in the week, depending on the full moon. This year Dr. Cleland supposes it to have fallen on a Thursday, and everybody rested on that day. The 16th, Friday, was not a Sabbath. Then the spices were prepared. The 17th, Saturday, was again a Sabbath day, and a day of rest. The resurrection took place, according to this view, in the evening just as the sun had set and the first day of the week, according to Jewish reckoning, had been ushered in. This makes three days and three nights complete.

It is impossible, without entering into minute inquiries that would carry us beyond the limit of an ordinary newspaper article, to give a definite expression as to the merits of the two views stated. But the student may find some aid in the hints given and pursue the subject further.

One thing must be borne in mind, however. The ancient calculations of time were more or less uncertain. Months were calculated from imperfect tables or from the first appearance of the new moons. An assembly in Jerusalem was charged with the duty of taking observations and subordinate bodies in other places performed a similar duty. Persons were sent out to watch for the appearance of the moon, and the testimony of these did not always agree. In the year of the death of our Savior an intercalary month, Veadar, was added to the year, and the exact length of this had to be determined by the appearance of the moon of the following Nisan, and if, as was sometimes the case, the added month had been announced to contain 29 days but it was afterwards found necessary to add one day, it is clear that a discrepancy of reckoning might occur, so that what some considered the 13th of Nisan would by others be written the 14th. Epiphanius is quoted as authority for the fact that that very year some difficulties arose among the Jews about the passover.

This fact is important, for it proves both that the supposed discrepancies in the records of the evangelists would be easily solved, if all the facts were obtainable, and also the necessity of proceeding with caution in an inquiry which on every step is beset with so many difficulties.

COMING WEST NOW.

According to the Washington dispatches the West has not got rid of the "Industrial Armies" by any means. These semi-military organizations promise to become peregrinating bodies in the land, inflicting their unwelcome presence upon the East and West in turn, as shall suit their special whim