

zation. Figuratively speaking, bright flowers have sprung from the Gospel plant represented in the Church, have continued to their full period, and have passed on their way to the full fruition of their hopes in the eternal consecration of their works; others, apparently as bright, have been cut away, and although praised and prized for a time, have faded from sight and from existence. But the Church goes on—the plant lives, and the fragrance and abundance of its bloom is undiminished and undiminishing.

THE EIGHT-HOUR LAW.

David Rees, writing from Mammoth, Utah, under date of June 10, says:

To the Editor:

I shall esteem it a favor if you will kindly give me the following information through the columns of the *DESERET NEWS*; I have been requested by several workmen of this place to ask it of you:

Is a man liable to a fine or imprisonment for working over the eight hours which the law of Utah proclaims? I refer to mill men and men who work in the ore bins.

It is possible that the law was intended to punish the employe as well as the employer, where a workman puts in more than eight hours' time in one day, but there is nothing in the law itself that shows a design on the part of its framers to punish anybody. The conclusion that it was intended to include employer and employe can be drawn only from the use of the word "person" in the third section, but it is not improbable that if a court were to hold that the law had any effect, it would say that "person" must be construed in the same class as its associate words, "firm, corporation, manager," etc., and applied only to employers. In that case, then, employe would not be liable. The act defines the period of employment to be eight hours; and "employment" means either the act of employing or of being employed, hence in this sense both parties would be included as possible violators of the law. The enactment being unintelligible on the point inquired after, a direct answer to Mr. Rees's question cannot be given. It is not likely, however, that any man would be prosecuted for working over the eight hours if he chose to do so; although an employer might be proceeded against if he required more than eight hours' service.

The fact of the matter is that the eight-hour law as it stands on the statute books is absolutely worthless. This conclusion is not based upon any question as to the constitutionality of the act, but because it is meaningless. If it had been framed as a "sop" to milne employe, with the full intention of making it of no effect, the end could not have been reached more thoroughly than by the present wording. The law declares the "period of employment" to be eight hours, but contains no expression forbidding a longer period. It provides a penalty for violating the act, but makes no suggestion as to what is a violation. If a court were to decide that in fixing the period at eight hours the

Legislature meant to say that a longer time is a violation, then is doing so the court would have to hold that a shorter period than eight hours also is a violation. Under the rule of strict construction of criminal statutes, no court could give force to this law. It is a meaningless jumble, not worth the paper it is printed on in the statute book, so far as any protection it affords to workingmen.

GLADSTONE ON FUTURE LIFE.

Thoughts and sentiments upon religious topics, by Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, should be of special interest to all who are looking forward to a life after this. When a man on his journey towards eternity, has come in so close proximity to the border line that he can, as it were, discern in the distance the contours rising before him, and when his career has been that which characterizes Mr. Gladstone's, he is entitled to be heard with marked attention. His words are not those of a theorist nor those of a mere reciter of existing creeds. They are likely to carry the reader as near the verge of eternal truth as it is possible for uninspired utterances to conduct mortal men.

In the June number of the *North American Review* Mr. Gladstone discusses "The Future Life and the Conditions of Man Therein." The closing sentences of this essay are especially significant because they reveal an unmistakable tendency on the part of the author towards a doctrine not generally looked upon as orthodox. The writer points out that the final fate of the wicked and of the righteous is "only in part disclosed" and that some more light on this subject is to be expected. Referring to Bishop Butler's remark that the future is the foundation of all our hopes and fears that are really worthy of consideration, he says:

In the shadow of this glorious teaching lay the inevitable question: What shall be the lot of those who reject it? This question was small and remote for the 120 elect souls in the upper room set upon pursuance of the truth and the right. But it gradually grew large and larger still for the Church as it spread from land to land and obtained the world's confessed or professed allegiance. The provision for meeting this question was ready to hand. It lay, in a certain sense, outside the Gospel, and was anterior to it, like the other laws of our human nature, and of the government of the world by its Author.

But this law, like all other antecedent and perpetual laws, was acknowledged by the Gospel—the law of indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, yet acknowledged with a sorrow which is shown by the comparatively fluctuating or shadowy manner in which this sad reverse of the picture is handled—the inseparable but obscure under side, so to speak, of the great foundation stone of peace and happiness.

How much do we know of the lot of the perversely wicked? They disappear into pain and sorrow; the veil drops upon them in that condition. Every indication of a further change is withheld, so that if it be designed it has not been made known, and is nowhere incorporated with the divine teaching. Whatever else pertains to this sad subject is withheld

from our too curious and unprofitable gaze.

The specific and limited statements supplied to us are after all only expressions in particular form of immovable and universal laws—on the one hand, of the irrevocable union between suffering and sin; on the other hand, of the perfection of the most high—both of them believed in full, but only in part disclosed, and having elsewhere, it may be, their plenary manifestation, in that day of the restitution of all things for which a groaning and travelling creation yearns.

The venerable author on the one hand fails to find in the written word any intimation of a possible change of the condition of those who die unrepentant; on the other hand he is not prepared to state that the Scriptures do reveal that no change is possible, and this is a marked retreat from the creeds that have prevailed for centuries. His position is somewhat similar to that of the eminent theological scholar, Dr. Angus, who in a lecture before some students on this topic once said:

I can find no valid ground for the supposition that the words "eternal" and "eternity" used in connection with the sufferings of sinners hereafter, admit of any other than the common interpretation, but I can state here, what I would not care to say elsewhere, that if God in His mercy should have decreed to terminate their sufferings, I could not say that I had been deceived, for it is barely possible that the terms in which the Scriptures refer to these things denote a limited duration of existence.

Here are two competent witnesses testifying to the fact that in their judgment the pronouncements of the creeds concerning endless damnation are not unquestionably supported by holy writ. Mr. Gladstone's testimony is particularly important. He finds that all the Scripture declarations are only expressions of the universal law that sin and misery go together, but he also finds references to "a day of the restitution of all things for which a groaning and travelling creation yearns." It seems to us that when the truth is once admitted that the Scriptures do not state that the condition of sinners is unalterably fixed at the moment of death, the way is prepared for the grand principle proclaimed in this age, that salvation is offered also on the other side of the veil.

To Mr. Gladstone's view the unrepentant sinner disappears in pain and sorrow. "Every indication of further change is withheld." Is there then, in the Scriptures no statement to the effect that the mercy of God endureth forever? Are we not taught that the Gospel is being proclaimed to the dead and that ordinances are performed for them? Does not one of the last scenes of the great world drama consist in death and Hades giving up their dead? Indications there certainly are of a change even behind that veil of pain and sorrow, but it will be admitted readily that without some further "plenary" manifestation, the subject would be one extremely obscure as to details. So was the whole Gospel plan of salvation to those who depended on nothing but the written word in the Mosaic dispensation. Without a plenary manifestation, atonement, justi-