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# RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER,

And Bible Society, Missionary, and Sabbath School Advocate.

E McLEOD, Editor.

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.—PETER.

G. W. DAY, Printer

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better medium than our columns.

## Siege of Sardis.

ISAIAH XLV. 23—XLV. 3.

The two greatest cities taken by Cyrus were Sardis and Babylon, and of their reduction we have more particular accounts than of any others, and both of them were taken by stratagem. The capture of Babylon is alone directly mentioned in Scripture, and will demand particular notice.— But although Sardis is not named, we have little doubt that some of the operations against it are alluded to in the general prediction of the triumphs of Cyrus; for which reason, as well as because there are various remarkable particulars in this siege and the battle preceding it, which give a clear idea of the ancient oriental military operations alluded to by the prophets, we think it well to give one evening to this matter. It will be perceived that some of the military proceedings derive much illustration from the Assyrian sculptures, and the information which we have lately furnished in connection with them; the more valuable, as the ancient Persian sculptures afford no representations of battles or sieges.

After a long march, Cyrus, as already hinted, came in front of the confederated army at Thybarna in Lydia, not far from Sardis, the capital of that country. His army was 196,000 strong, horse and foot, besides which he had three hundred of those "iron chariots" of war, so often mentioned in Scripture, and which were very formidable in those times. They were armed with projecting scythes, which cut the adverse soldiers to pieces in a most cruel manner wherever the chariots were driven. The only effectual way of dealing with them was to render them useless for the time by slaying the horses by which they were drawn. But to prevent this, the horses of the Persian chariots, four abreast in each, were covered with trappings that were proof against all missile weapons. The Persian army had also a large number of other chariots, or rather wains of large size, each drawn by sixteen oxen, upon each of which was a kind of tower, eighteen or twenty feet high; and in each tower were lodged twenty archers. These towers, which must have been of wood, could not but give a most curious appearance to an advancing army. As they went with the army, they were designed for service in action, rather than in sieges, for which a different and more substantial kind of tower was required; and their use seems to have been to enable the marksmen, from their elevated station, to "pick off" the most distinguished of the enemy, as well as to furnish a centre of resistance around which the troops might form or rally, if momentarily broken or driven back. There was, moreover, in the Persian army a considerable number of camels, each mounted by two Arabian archers, the one looking towards the head and the other towards the tail of the animal.

The army of Croesus was twice as numerous as that of Cyrus, consisting of no fewer than 420,000 men. Both armies were drawn up in an immense plain, which gave room for extending their wings to the right and left. The design of Croesus gave which he placed his chief reliance, was to avail himself of his larger numbers by surrounding or hemming in the Persian army. The main strength of his army lay in the Egyptian auxiliaries, who alone numbered 120,000 men of tried valor; and these were wisely placed in the centre. When he two armies were in sight of each other, Croesus, perceiving how much his front exceeded that of the Persians, made his centre halt and the wings to advance, with the design to enclose the enemy, and begin the attack on three sides at the same time. When the two wings were sufficiently extended, Croesus gave the signal for the main body to advance, on which it marched up to the front of the Persian host, the attack upon which was thus commenced on the front and both flanks at once. The great manoeuvre, which seems to have been pretty well executed, certainly presented a very threatening aspect to the Persians, considering the great disparity of numbers. But Cyrus was by no means alarmed. He signalled his troops to face about, and was thus enabled to take in flank the enemy's forces that were marching to fall upon his ear, and soon put them into great disorder. At the same moment a squadron of camels was made to march against the other wing of the enemy, which consisted almost wholly of cavalry; their horses were, as the experience of Cyrus had taught him to reckon upon, so much alarmed at the advance of so large a body of camels, that they became unmanageable, threw their riders, and trod them under foot, thus occasioning great confusion in that quarter; and while they were in this disorder, a Persian officer of great experience, named Artagersas, at the head of a small body of horse, charged them so vigorously, that they could never afterwards rally; and the chariots armed with scythes being at the same time driven furiously among them, the rout was on that side complete. Both the wings of the enemy being thus broken and dispersed, Cyrus gave orders to Abradatas, his chief favorite, to fall upon the centre with his chariots. The first ranks consisted mostly of Lydians, and gave way

before the violence of the charges; but the Egyptians being covered with their bucklers, and marching so close that the chariots had not room to penetrate their ranks, stood their ground. A great slaughter of the Persians ensued. Abradatas himself was killed, his chariot overturned, and most of his men cut in pieces. Upon this, the Egyptians boldly advanced, and compelled the Persian infantry to give way, driving them back quite to their engines. Here they were met by a shower of arrows and javelins discharged from the towers; and at the same time the Persians rear, advancing sword in hand, compelled the retreating archers and spearmen to return to the charge.

By this time Cyrus having put to route both the horse and foot on the left of the Egyptians, pushed on the centre, where he had the mortification of seeing his Persians again giving ground.— Judging that the only way of arresting the Egyptians from pressing their advantage was to attack them in the rear, he did so; and the Persian cavalry at the same time coming up to his assistance, the fight was renewed with great slaughter on both sides, for the Egyptians finding themselves thus attacked in the rear, faced themselves about and defended themselves with incredible bravery. Cyrus himself was in great danger; for his horse being killed under him, he fell into the midst of his enemies. But his appointed work, as the punisher of Babylon and the deliverer of the Jews, was not yet accomplished, and although he knew it not, his life was safe until that work was done. He was saved by his Persians, who, alarmed at his danger, threw themselves headlong upon those that surrounded their fallen king, and succeeded in preserving him from their hands. The battle then became more bloody than ever. But at length Cyrus, admiring the valor of the Egyptians and concerned to see so many brave men perish, offered them honorable conditions, at the same time letting them know that they were entirely unsupported, all their allies having abandoned the field. On this they accepted the terms offered; and having stipulated that they should not be employed against Croesus, in whose service they had been engaged, they surrendered to the conqueror, and from that time served him with great fidelity and zeal.

This engagement lasted till night. The allies dispersed from the field of battle to their several countries; and Croesus with his native Lydians withdrew into Sardis. Cyrus made no attempt to pursue the fugitives, but the next day he marched with all his forces against the city. Croesus, who wanted not for valor, thought himself still able to meet the Persians in battle; and he therefore marched out to encounter them at the head of his native troops. As this force consisted mostly of cavalry, Cyrus confronted them with his camels, and the horses being unable to endure the sight and smell of so huge a body of these animals, were thrown into disorder. But the Lydians dismounting, fought on foot. They kept their ground very obstinately for some time; but at last finding themselves overmatched, were forced to make their retreat into Sardis, which was immediately invested by the Persians. To reduce a place so strong, so well provisioned, and so bravely garrisoned, threatened to be a work of time; indeed, as Croesus trusted, of so much time, as would enable him to obtain assistance from Greece. Yet the place was almost immediately taken, and that almost without the exchange of blows, by the operation of two stratagems of war, one of which seems very odd, and the other we should call not humane or moral, did we not remember that humanity or morality are things not much belonging to the trade of war in any age or country, and certainly not to such wars as the ancients waged.

The first stratagem is thus related:—"At the siege of Sardis, Cyrus constructed machines of wood that were as high as the walls, and placed upon them images dressed up like Persians, with beards on their faces, quivers on their shoulders, and bows in their hands. These were advanced during the night close to the walls, so that the figures rose above the fort. Early in the morning Cyrus caused an attack to be made in a different quarter, to the defence of which the whole force of the town was immediately directed. The images in the opposite quarter rising above the wall, and seeming in the distance to be actually upon it, being then accidentally discovered, a great cry arose, and there was a general panic, in the belief that the besiegers had got possession of the place.— Throwing open the gates, every one made his escape in the best manner he could; and Cyrus became master of Sardis at discretion."

The other is this: After Cyrus had made himself master of Sardis, and Croesus still held out in the fort in expectation of assistance from Greece, he ordered the Sardinian prisoners, the friends and the relations of the besieged, to be bound and displayed before them. A herald, at the same time, proclaimed that if the fort were surrendered to Cyrus, they should receive their relations safe and without ransom; but if they persisted in holding it out against him, he would hang up every one of them before their eyes. To save their friends, therefore, they chose rather to give up the fort than await the issue of those precarious hopes, with which Croesus had flattered himself, of assistance from the states of Greece.

In this connection, we must not overlook the lines—

"I will give thee the treasures of darkness,  
And hidden riches of secret places."

This is certainly a distinct allusion to the immense wealth which Cyrus was to derive from his conquests, and which were such as no other conqueror realised. Not only did he acquire the immense riches of Babylon, as distinctly promised by Jeremiah (1. 37); but the treasures which Croesus delivered up to him is reckoned to have been equal to the enormous sum of £126,224,000 sterling. The

highest calculation of the wealth which Nadir Shah derived from the spoils of India scarcely exceeded half this amount, while some reduce it to a quarter.

The second of these lines clearly alludes to the Oriental practice of hiding treasure in secret places, in the absence of such means of secure deposit or investment as we possess, which custom we shall hereafter find an opportunity of fully elucidating.—Killo's Bible Illustrations.

## Morals of Dress.

Every Christian must acknowledge the sin and folly of extravagance in dress. But there is another extreme, which we sometimes find among good people, of attempting to cut and square the dress of every man and woman by precise and uniform rule. We cannot be too cautious in attaching undue importance to mere externals, as it encourages self-complacency, pride, and a disposition to sit in judgment upon all who differ from us. Every nice observer must have remarked, among the Society of Friends, where dress is so exclusive a badge of discipleship, that, when the "birthright" members leave the society, and assume the gay, or "world's people" dress, in doffing their old costume, they lay aside with it religious principles, and become more irreligious and irreverent than any other class of persons so strictly educated. This has been our observation. We have seen this case with the children of pious and strict-dressing Methodists. Even Wesley, the great apostle of Methodism, after prescribing a peculiar garb, as applicable to all of his sect, regardless of position in life, was obliged to modify his opinions, after they were carried out and tasted. Southey says, in the Life of Wesley, "This injunction (alluding to his rules for dressing) was afterwards withdrawn, because it was found impracticable, as interfering in a manner not to be borne with domestic affairs. He admitted, therefore, that 'woman under the yoke of unbelieving husbands, or parents (as well as men in office), might be constrained to put on gold or costly apparel; and in cases of this kind, says he, 'plain experience shows that the beneficial influence is suspended; so that whenever it is not our choice but our cross, it may consist with godliness, with a meek and quiet spirit, with lowliness of heart, and with Christian seriousness.'"

It appears to us, dress should be regulated as a matter of self-respect, and as evincing respect to others. Joseph seemed so to consider it. When he received the summons to appear before Pharaoh, he appeared in robes of purple and scarlet, to the usages of the country, in order to pay respect to the king. Nothing can be more low-bred and grovelling, than to dress out of mere personal vanity to excel others in this particular. When the attire is regulated by right motives, and is acquiesced in to gratify the taste of a father, brother, or husband, it is improving to the social character. It becomes important among those interchanges of little kindnesses and courtesies of which the happiness of everyday life is made up. If a father or husband fancy a plain style of dress, the dutiful daughter or wife finds her pleasure in a ready compliance with the wishes of these friends.

Every Christian mind will perceive when its time and thoughts are unduly occupied with the question, "What shall I put on?" and thus each individual must answer and decide with his own conscience.

We recollect the case of a pious friend, who had adopted a plain style of dress from taste and choice. She confined herself to a few colours, which, though subdued and neat, were rare and difficult to obtain. She requested a friend in a neighboring city, to procure for her an article of precisely such a texture, and precisely such a shade. The friend, after spending many hours in fruitless search, gave up in despair, and purchased an article nearest to the directions that it was possible to obtain. It, however, did not suit, and was laid aside. As the lady employed to purchase was considered much more gay in her dress, the lady who gave the commission was greatly astonished at what her friend told her, that she had never spent the one-twentieth part of time or thought upon a garment of her own in all her life. We think it a good rule, in regard to this matter, not to set the mind on any particular style or article of dress, but if it be convenient, and in harmony with the apparel generally worn, to wear it, and think no more about it.

We recollect another case of a lady who had been remarkable fond of dress, which had greatly fed her vanity. When she became a truly devout woman, her conscience smote her so severely for the time wasted in this manner, that every thing associated with it became painful to her, and she resolved to adopt the Quaker costume. She wore it to Sabbaths at church, and then laid it aside, for she said she never had been so troubled about her outward adornment as on these occasions. Her thoughts dwelt upon her plain garb instead of the services of the sanctuary.

What is said by the biographer of the pious and sensible Lady Darcy Maxwell, on this subject, is not only Christian, but in good taste.

"Her dress," he observes, "which was as much dictated by conscience, as formed on good taste, was very plain, being without ornament or anything that could serve only for show; yet it was a plainness of her own, equally removed from the formal costume of the Quaker, and the frumpy of fashion, escaping at the same time the unconscious expensiveness of both. She did not begrudge herself from her rank, nor detract from her personal appearance, by this plainness of apparel; but she found that she could relieve many a suffering creature, and gave education to many an orphan child, with what numbers expend in useless

decorations, whose income with as much below her own as was their situation in society." As Lady M. had the misfortune to lose her husband and only child at nineteen, she was left to follow the unbiassed dictates of her own mind; yet she would have been the last to judge those whose different situations might seem to require a modification of her course.—Christian Treasury.

## Quenching the Spirit.

A few years ago, as I was laboring in our Western wilds, an individual rode up, and taking me by the hand, inquired earnestly, "Will you go and see a dying young man? He is in agony, and says there is no hope."

There was no time to be lost. I went with him. After climbing many a rocky ascent, I came into an open path, which soon conducted me to the house. Anxious ones stood weeping without, soon held both my hands, conducting me up a long flight of steps to the room of the dying man. Not a word was spoken. Other hearts were too full, and my own was sinking beneath a weight of responsibility. Earnestly seeking the Divine blessing, I ascended the steps.

On reaching the top, a venerable mother approached me, saying, "I'm glad you have come. Do speak to my son; perhaps he may yet be saved." I pressed the hand that led me in, and in a moment the most heart-rending scene was before me. A young man in the agonies of death—rolling his eyes, and flinging his arms wildly about him—crying out, "O I am lost! Hell is before me; in a few minutes I shall be among the damned." He ceased speaking, and I feared his spirit had taken a flight for the region of woe. He soon revived again. Seizing the opportunity, I repeated slowly the words, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Seeing that I had his attention, I spoke of the free, unmerited mercy of Christ, able to save the chiefest of sinners, saying, "There is hope for the repenting sinner, even at the eleventh hour."

He replied, "No, there is no hope. Once I might have been saved, but now it is too late—too late." Then with a groan of the deepest despair, he exclaimed, "O that I had heard then!" In vain I urged him to cast himself unreservedly on the sovereign mercy of God, as "able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through him." He only replied, "I have resisted the Holy Ghost, there is no hope." Unhappy wretch!

Perfect silence reigned, saved as a low deep moan came from the dying bed. I tried to commit him to the mercy of Christ.

I spoke to him again, but he hopelessly said, "It is no use. I am hastening to eternity." No tears fell. He manifested no contrition for sin, no ray of hope. A wild piercing cry wrung our hearts with anguish, and he sunk upon his pillow.

Reviving yet again, he said thoughtfully, "Once I was brought to feel myself a sinner. For days and weeks I was anxious about my soul. Something said, Now is the accepted time; my heart said, Not now, to-morrow. But when 'to-morrow' came, I still put it off. My gay companions laughed at my seriousness, and tried to allure me back to the follies of sin. I said to myself, 'I will go with you to-day, but to-morrow I will not.'"

Pleased with present victory, they led him on from pleasure to vice, the card table and the social bar. He took wine, he laughed, and was the gayest of the gay. Conscience raised her warning voice, and bade him pause; but he rushed heedlessly on.

He stated, that one pleasant Sabbath morning a young man met him when on his way to join his companions, and taking him cordially by the hand, said, "Friend, you seem to be enjoying yourself; come with me, and we will have better enjoyment still." He joined him it a walk which ended at the house of God. Startled, he drew back, and would have fled from the sanctuary, had not his friend urged affectionately, "Do come in a little while," and took his seat among the worshippers. Her conscience, as if roused to a final conflict, reminded him of broken resolutions, and bade him seek Christ to-day. "No, not to-day," was his response to the gentle whispers of the Spirit. He remained through the morning services. His friend, encouraged by his stay, drew him into a "Bible class," where the teacher faithfully enforced the duty of immediate preparation for eternity. The young man was impressed, and sat thoughtfully revolving the question, "Shall I, or not? I will decide now, or else put it forever out of mind." The class was dismissed. The words, "To-day prepare to meet thy God," rung in his ears as he walked down the aisle.

The decision was made: "Not to-day, but to-morrow I will." From that moment all was darkness, terror, and dismay. Ere the night had passed over him, he was seized with a malignant fever, which in two days left him in the state I found him. "And now," he added, "I have cursed my Maker, and am dying without hope—without hope." I still urged him to flee to Christ, but in vain. Despair only was his; one deep groan and shriek of terror, and he expired with these fearful words on his lips, "Lost, lost, lost!"

Quench not the Spirit of God. Heed its gentle admonitions. Once grieved away, it may never return, till in another world, its memory pierce your soul with anguish "past hope."—"You might, but you would not. I entreated, but you refused to hear. I stood long waiting, again and again urging your acceptance of offered mercy. Now it is too late. The door of mercy is shut, forever shut."—American Messenger.

## STATE OF AFFAIRS IN CHINA.

We are still without any intelligence that can be relied upon, as to the actual progress of the Revolution in China, and the proceedings of the Nankin Government. The Pekin Gazette, of April 20, admits that Woo-chang, the capital of Hoo-pih, has been taken by the rebels, and that Hank'how has again fallen into their hands. We are so unfortunate, however, as to have no precise notion of what these names indicate. No such province as Hoo-pih (at least under that appellation) appears in the list of the fifteen provinces into which the kingdom was divided in the reign of the Emperor CIEN-LING; and as to Hank'low, we can only infer from the statement, that the Lieutenant-Governor of Hoo-kwang and the Prefect of the provincial city both died in the struggle, that it must be the capital city of that province. The vast basin of Central China, which is almost encircled with mountains, is divided into the four provinces of Seshen, Kwei-tchoo, Hoo-kwang, and Kyang-si. Now, the North China Herald states, that the rebels have taken the city of Kwang-sin, in the north-eastern part of Kyang-si. As both this province and that of Hoo-kwang are in Central China, it would seem that the successful operations of the Nankin forces are still limited to that portion of the Empire, and that they have not established themselves in the Northern provinces. So long as this is the state of things, and the Imperial Court enjoy undisturbed security at Pekin, the struggle may be indefinitely prolonged, unless what is already a virtual partition of the Empire shall become the subject of a permanent arrangement.

On every side, the Celestial Empire seems to be threatened with dismemberment. While Russia has been allowed to take possession of the whole valley of the Amoor, the enterprising Ruler of Nepal is pushing his conquests into Tibet, and is pressing the Chinese Government in that quarter. TAE-PING-WANG rules at Nankin; and the North China Herald states, that LEW, of Shanghai notoriety, and SEAOU-HIN-TSE, have raised their standard at Tung-pa, situate about sixty miles to the north-west of Soo-chow. The Canton Government, according to the last-mentioned authority, is straining every nerve to carry forward its plan of ruling the country by sanguinary force; and, in pursuance of this, a reward of fifty dollars per head is given to the leading men of villages for every man denounced as "a disaffected."

The only representative of the Imperial Power which is giving signs of vitality and vigour; and the Querland Friend of China regards "the recent reverses of the rebels as only temporary, and local to the country adjacent to Canton." Who are meant by "rebels," is doubtful; but we believe that no parties connected with the TAE-PING-WANG Government have approached Canton or any part of the coast. The local disorders are the work of piratical adventurers, probably connected with the Triad Association. Thus, the movement at Amoy, in May, 1854, is stated by the American Missionaries stationed there, to have been quite distinct from the great movement in the northern part of the Empire, and to have had no religious character whatever. The same remark applies, we apprehend, to the insurgents of Shanghai, although they looked for support from the Nankin Government. It is strange, that none of the European or American Missionaries should feel it to be their duty to obtain, by some means or other, nay, at almost any sacrifice, accurate information of the actual state of things in the Interior, where their influence might possibly be most beneficially exerted. At Hong-Kong, they seem to be just as much in the dark as we are in London.—London Patriot.

## The Widow's Mite.

An Incident from the Mem. of a Western Agent.  
In the spring of 185—, while operating in one of the interior counties of my State, a clergyman kindly invited me to accompany him to a Sabbath evening appointment in a neighboring village, offering me the privilege of presenting my cause to the people as an inducement. The village of W—, like many villages and even to us in the West, within a few years had risen as by magic from the bosom of a dense forest, and had already become the centre of trade for a rich neighbourhood around. But, although there were number of professors of religion and many serious persons in and near the village, no house of worship for any denomination had yet been erected; for the evening, therefore, we were compelled to occupy the village schoolhouse. The house was dimly lighted with candles, but well filled with serious and attentive listeners, while the writer, from behind a chair for a pulpit, endeavoured to set forth the claims of the blessed Volume, and urge the friends of Jesus to "hold it forth" to a dying world. After the sermon a subscription was taken in behalf of the Bible Cause. In this work I assisted. It fell to my lot to wait upon some ladies who occupied some seats to the left of the preacher's chair, nearly all of whom contributed more or less to the good Cause. At length I came to one who was dressed in the weeds of mourning, her whole attire, though neat, indicating that the bereaved one was in very humble circumstances in life. I asked her, as I had the others, "Madam, what will you give to the Bible Cause?" She looked up from beneath her plain sun-bonnet, and sorrowfully but sweetly said, "Oh, Sir I am a poor widow, I have two little fatherless children, and I have but fifty cents in the world; but I'll give that." For a moment I hardly knew what to do. I was unwilling to take the last fifty cents from a poor widow, even for so