

page 129

VOL. XXI. MAY 1, 1900. No. 9.

CONTENTS.

The Memorial Supper.....131
A Few Sample Reports.....132
Poem--Only a Few More Years.....134
Knowledge Increases Responsibilities.....134
Come! Weary and Heavy-laden.....136
Two Types of Sinners.....138
The Parable of the Sower.....140
The Message of the Kingdom.....141
News From the "British Branch".....142
Questions and Answers.....142
About Magnetic--Hypnotic
Cures, etc.....142
Who is Born of God?.....143
How Will the Dead Hear?.....144
Joining Trade Unions.....144
Items: Back Issues of the Tower, etc.....130

page 130

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

--ADDRESS TO--

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY,
"BIBLE HOUSE," 610, 612, 614 ARCH ST., ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$1.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, N.Y. DRAFT, MONEY ORDER, OR REGISTERED.
FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL
TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:--

Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity
or adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER will be supplied FREE, if
they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting
the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our
list continually.

=====

DO NOT FORGET THAT IT IS UNSAFE TO MAIL MONEY.

SEND P.O. OR EXPRESS ORDER OR DRAFT.

DAWN IV. IN GERMAN.

We are glad to announce this edition now ready. Advance
orders are being filled as rapidly as possible. We thank our
German brethren for the patience they have so generously
exercised.

BACK ISSUES OF THE WATCH TOWER.

We have many inquiries for back volumes of our Journal. We have made up as many sets nearly complete as possible-- about 150 sets as follows:--

Eight issues of 1891; seventeen of '92; nineteen of '93; twenty-two of '94; twenty-four of '95; twenty-four of '96; twenty of '97; twenty-three of '98; eighteen of '99.

So long as these sets last we shall be pleased to supply them at the regular rate--50 cents a dozen--any year, but no less than the complete set for any year.

THE VOLUNTEER AMMUNITION.

We are sending it out as rapidly as possible, but the field is a wide one and all have not yet been supplied. Besides, new "Volunteers" are from day to day coming to see that this is a very special opportunity for serving the King's cause. If your first lot is insufficient let us have "Order No. 2 for Ammunition" by the time you are sure what will be necessary to completely supply your district.

=====

R2622 : page 131

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER.

EACH year seems to add to the interest of the Lord's people in the celebration of the great event which lies at the foundation of all our Christian hopes--the celebration of the death of "Christ, our Passover." Each year the matter seems to be more clearly grasped by a larger number, and correspondingly the solemnity and holy joy proper to the occasion seems to be the more intense, and the overflowing blessing to be more pronounced.

Many of the little companies of the Lord's people who celebrated on the evening of April 12th have responded to our request for information respecting the numbers participating, and the measure of the Lord's Spirit and blessing prevailing. From these reports we judge that the number participating this year was considerably more than last year. Though we have not heard from nearly so many, the totals are larger. We believe, too, from the letters that the meaning of the institution was very deeply appreciated, not only as marking the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, but also as marking the consecration of his people to be one with him in his sacrifice.

The Allegheny Church had a most blessed season, about 290 participating. We first reviewed the general meaning of the Passover, as it was instituted with the Jews, tracing the relationship between the typical Passover Lamb and Christ the Lamb of God, our Passover, and saw in the first-born of Israel passed over in that night a type of the Church of the First-born,

which God is passing over during this Gospel night. We saw that subsequently these first-born ones became the leaders of Israel as a whole, and their deliverers from Egyptian bondage, and we saw that the anti-type of that deliverance will be the ultimate deliverance of all who love God and who desire to serve him, from the bondage of the world and of sin and of Satan, the antitype of Pharaoh, and that this ultimate deliverance would be during the Millennial age, when "the Church of the First-born" ones will be associated with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom.

Next we saw how that the Jews had celebrated the type for over sixteen centuries, with no knowledge of the antitype, and yet that in God's due time Christ, the antitypical Lamb, was slain on the very same day of the month that the typical Lamb was slain; and that on the very same day in which he and his disciples met as Jews to celebrate the typical Lamb and the typical passing over, our Lord instituted a new memorial, which should not look back to the type, but to himself, as the antitype. We noted also the appropriateness of the emblems which Jesus chose to represent his flesh and his blood; we saw that unleavened bread most beautifully illustrated the purity, the sinlessness, of our dear Redeemer, and that the cup, the fruit of the vine, represented his sufferings--not sufferings that were grievous, but joyous, endured willingly, gladly, on our behalf, and we rejoiced in these things.

We considered how we were to feed upon the Lord in our hearts while using the bread emblematically--that we could feed upon his flesh in the sense of calling to mind the fact that only through his sacrifice could we have life, only by his becoming our substitute in death could we, as a race, be set free from the condemnation that was upon us through Father Adam's transgression. We considered the fruit of the vine, the symbol of our Lord's blood, as the sealing of the New Covenant under which God, through Christ, could be merciful toward our imperfections, accepting our intentions, even though the weaknesses of the flesh might sometimes hinder us from attaining all the desired results.

Then we viewed the matter from the other standpoint--the secondary one mentioned by the Apostle in 1 Cor. 10:16,17, viz., that the entire Church is one loaf, and that it is the duty and the privilege of all who have become members of the one loaf, the one body of Christ, to be broken in the service of the Head and in the service of each other, that thus we might have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings and ultimately be sharers in his glory. We saw that the cup of blessing with which we bless is indeed our communion or fellowship in the blood [sufferings] of Christ, our mingling of our lives with his life, our joining with him in "filling up that which is behind of

the afflictions of Christ." We sought to enter into the

R2622 : page 132

very deep meaning of the beautiful symbol, and to have it in our hearts a power of God, leading us to keener appreciation of our dear Saviour, and to a keener devotion as his disciples, to walk in his footsteps.

Then, after a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the living Bread that came down from heaven--for Jesus, who was not a condemned member of the human family, but a specially provided one, suitable to be our Saviour, our Bread, our Life-giver, and for all the blessing which we have through his great sacrifice, we partook of the bread. After this we gave thanks for the cup, acknowledging that we have no righteousness of our own, even though all the past were forgiven, and that we could not hope to stand before God acceptably or to have any dealings with

R2623 : page 132

him except under the gracious provisions of the New Covenant, sealed with the precious blood of Christ. We gave thanks also that by God's grace we have been called to fellowship with Jesus, and told the Lord of our hopes that by his grace we might run our course with faithfulness and eventually be received to joint-heirship with our Master in his glory when we are partakers with him of the joys of the Kingdom.

The simple but impressive memorial being ended, it was requested that in order that the solemnity of the hour might abide with us, to our mutual comfort and joy, we should part on that evening without entering into any conversation likely to attract our minds from the precious things which filled them, but rather might, for the hours following, remember the severe trials of the disciples, and the dear Master's trials, and seek to enter into close sympathy with his faithfulness, and to be all the more on guard against the wiles of the Adversary, which seem to be so potent at this season of the year. Then singing the first hymn we were dismissed.

An incident which added to our blessing in connection with this service was the fact that our dear Brother Horace A. Randle, who for about twenty years has been a missionary in China, was with us, and took part in the service with evident pleasure to himself and profit to us all. Bro. Randle wrote us in January last that he was about to start on his long journey of 16,000 miles, with the desire and intention to reach Allegheny in time for this Memorial service. He arrived just the day before, and was very warmly welcomed by us all. He addressed us on Easter Sunday, amongst other good things telling us

of his great joy in the harvest truth, and of his intense desire to make known the grace of God to all the Lord's dear people, and of some efforts he had already put forth, and some of the fruitage which the Lord had permitted him to see amongst the missionaries of his acquaintance. Yet with regret he told us of how few of the missionaries seem to have any interest in these matters, and how the majority of the responses he received were in the nature of scoffings. We hope that our dear brother will put his address into writing that we may lay it before the larger Church some time in the near future.

We have received reports, all of them excellent, from 280 celebrations--from every State of the Union and from Canada. A few of these were from solitary individuals, who had no opportunity of meeting with others, but to whom the Lord granted much blessing, compensating them for their loneliness otherwise. It may be interesting that we give the numbers participating at some of the gatherings reported, as follows:--

Baltimore, Md., 20; Brantford, Ont., 29; New York, 18; Poughkeepsie, N.Y., 16; Washington City, 23; Scranton, Pa., 28; Boston, Mass., 97; Philadelphia, Pa., 55; Toronto, Ont., 37; Tiffin, O., 22; Sippo, O., 19; Youngstown, O., 25; Cleveland, O., 38; Columbus, O., 27; Canton, O., 22; Toledo, O., 28; Wheeling, W.Va., 16; Dayton, O., 16; Indianapolis, Ind., 34; Chicago, Ill., 70; Saginaw, Mich., 18; St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., 23; Weatherford, Tex., 24; St. Louis, Mo., 55; Omaha, Neb., 19; Council Bluffs, Ia., 16; Vanetia, Tex., 16; Los Angeles, Cal., 61; Allegheny, 290.

We are not foolish enough to think that these figures give any occasion for boasting, for the total amounts to only a few over 2,600, and we have every reason to suppose that we have heard from two-thirds of those who celebrated: foreign reports will come later. However, we have every reason to believe that these numbers represent people who not only profess Christ, but who also are seeking daily to live the Christ-life. Moreover, they are full of the Jubilee music, and having heard the joyful sound they are all repeating it far and near. Consequently we expect a much larger showing next year, as others of the Lord's truth-hungry, famished household are found and fed with things new and old now supplied us by our Lord.

Boston reports the largest number of immersions preceding the Memorial, viz., 23.

page 132

A FEW SAMPLE REPORTS.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--It is with positive

pleasure I can say that sectarian bondage has no more power over me. Meditation upon this subject has occupied my thoughts for several years past. I have been deliberate and slow to act, weighing the subject on every side, lest too hasty a decision should have a reacting effect filled with hopeless regret. Indeed, I did not take the step until after much earnest prayer. Since that time the conviction has been growing stronger that no child of God can make a mistake by stepping away from modern churchianity, for instead of such an act being a step away from God, it is making a long stride towards God.

Last evening it was my privilege to partake of the Memorial Supper, tho it was taken alone. I am rejoicing in the fact that my God counts me worthy to do my share to fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ.

I could distribute a few of the WATCH TOWERS that are prepared for distribution, should you think best to send them.

Yours in the hope of the gospel,
MRS. A. AXTELL,--New York.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Last evening ten of us met to commemorate our dear Master's great ransom-sacrifice on our behalf, and to renew our covenant

page 133

with the Father. It was a glad, yet solemn time. Gladness for the great privilege of a "participation of the same loaf" and in the "same cup" and for the joy to know of all the blessings that will soon come to "all the families of the earth;" it was a solemn time as we realized to some extent the price with which we were bought, and the meaning of the covenant which we had made. Prayer was offered by each one present, and we felt that we had the witness of the spirit.

We were not quite so many in number as last year, owing to three being at another little gathering, one detained by sickness, and one, we fully believe, to have "gone home" during the past year. Truly it will be a glad time when we all get "home," for we do not feel at home here. All the brothers and sisters send you love and greetings in the Lord.

Your brother, in the bonds of love,
W. E. VAN AMBURGH,--S. Dakota.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--The Memorial Supper was celebrated in our home--participated in by four who met in His name. The Prince of Peace was with us and his presence and power was manifest, not to the natural eye or ear, but in holy communion with him. Bro. Barker from Boston served the little company for the first time. Bro. Heald and wife were also sharers of a rich blessing. I did not so much at

the time realize or appreciate his precious presence as afterward, when left alone in sweet meditation and communion. His blessed word and promises became spirit and life to me, increasing faith and love, until I fell at his feet in wonder and worship, that I, so unlike my blessed Redeemer, so unworthy of such love and grace, be allowed even to share some little suffering for his sake. How could it be? Only that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us;"-- we, indeed, the clay in the hands of the potter, yielding wholly to his touch. Thus in all things I will answer, not only unrepiningly, but gladly, "Father, not my will, but thine." I thank God for his divine love, as it makes me, as a humble child, for good conscience toward God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

I thank God for the many helps he has provided and is providing. MILLENNIAL DAWN and the WATCH TOWER have been and are such rich food to assist us in the knowledge and truth of God, and am only sorry that I cannot induce more to eat the food they contain.

Yours in Christ--Christ the hope of glory,
A. M. BLANCHARD,--Massachusetts.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I am addressing you a few lines to inform you of the blessed time we had at the Passover Supper on Thursday evening, when thirty-seven dear ones met to remember our dear Lord's death and to renew their vows of consecration. I may say this is just one-half more than we had at the Memorial Supper of 1899.

In our lessons of last Sunday and on Thursday afternoon we studied the trials and sufferings of our Lord and Master, in the garden of Gethsemane, during the various trials before the High Priests, before Pilate and Herod, and his finishing the work upon the cross. All seemed much interested and touched; all seemed thoroughly imbued with the responsibility and necessity of a more thorough consecration in the future, to the Lord's service, and love, harmony and zeal seemed to pervade, as also at the Lord's Supper in the evening.

All seemed to realize the deep solemnity of the occasion and there was apparent but one heart, one mind and one thought in desiring to energize for the crown of immortality and every heart seemed overflowing with love to our blessed Redeemer, and our prayer is that we may be permitted to "die daily" in his cause and to his honor and glory. We ask your prayers, dear brother, and the prayers of all the dear ones in Allegheny, that we may be kept bound together in love, harmony and peace, with our Heavenly Father, our loving Master and each other during the coming year.

Your servant in the Lord Jesus,
EBENEZER STOVEL,--Canada.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I thought I would send you a little report of our Thursday evening (Memorial Supper) meeting. On the eighth of the month I gave a talk to the friends on both sides on the subject, "Christ our passover," and the import of the bread and wine. I did this because I intended to visit Elgin on the 12th, which I did. They told me that they were specially in need of help for that occasion, and urgently requested me to be with them. Bros. Christensen and Sims took charge of the South Side meeting and Bros. Johnson and Petersen the West Side one. The friends of both sides say they had splendid meetings;--attendance at both meetings was about 70. The attendance at Elgin was 15. We had a glorious time there. I presume you had a splendid time in Allegheny on Thursday night. With best wishes and much Christian love, I remain as ever,

Yours in our dear Redeemer,
M. L. McPHAIL,--Chicago.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Concerning the Memorial Supper there were twelve participants, Bro. Brown having gone to Plymouth to conduct the memorial services there, and two sisters being prevented by sickness from meeting with us. No doubt Bro. Watts will advise you of our meeting, but lest he should not, I give you the details. We first sang hymn 23, "Blest be the tie that binds," which is so appropriate. As we repeated the words I was filled with a sense of the solemnity of the hymn--the tie which binds us to Christ, not only here, but all over the world. Then we had prayer, in which several joined. Bro. Watts then read quite a few texts appropriate to the occasion, with comments. He dwelt particularly upon the sacrificial feature--that our partaking of the cup symbolized our willingness to suffer, even to death, with him, that we may be raised with him. As there were five present who had never partaken of the memorial with us before, Bro. Watts explained the symbols particularly. We then sang the 122nd hymn and partook of the unleavened bread and grape juice, the broken body of our dear Lord and his shed blood, renewing our covenant to be broken with him, to die with him. We then sang hymn No. 1 and dispersed quietly. My heart is filled with joy and gratitude that I am permitted to share in these spiritual blessings.

May God bless and keep you near to him, and also your co-laborers! And in this thought I am sure

page 134

all the Church here would join, did they know of my writing to you.

Sincerely yours in Him,
FRANCES C. SHORE,--Michigan.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Friends numbering ninety-seven in all gathered last evening to commemorate the death of our dear Savior and Redeemer, our now present Lord. Our gathering was held in our usual place of worship and seated in nearly a circle, three to four rows deep about the Lord's table. We meditated on the events of that greatest scene in the world's history, listened to the lesson brought us by the Lord's faithful servant, our leader, and prayed for the similar gatherings, larger than ours, and the twos and threes scattered about throughout the world. Thanks were then offered for His body broken for us, of which we all then partook in symbol, and likewise concerning His shed blood. The 23 who were immersed the Sunday previous, thus symbolizing their consecration, were with us (except five from Lynn), and this added to the impressiveness of the service, calling vividly to our minds the remembrance of our own baptism and promise of obedience, even unto death, and causing us to have a desire to be more watchful and more faithful.

Yours in behalf of the Church at Boston, with cordial Christian greetings,

H. L. ALBEE,--Massachussetts.

R2630 : page 134

ONLY A FEW MORE YEARS.

--FRANCES C. SHORE.--

Only a few more years to learn our part,
Just a few more miles the race to run;
So gather courage fresh, O fainting heart!
O weary "feet," thy journey soon is done.

Only a few more months, but full of toil,
For in the "field" are hungry souls to feed,
Then struggle on O weary, burdened one!
For thou shalt find a strength in time of need.

Only a few more days to fill with love--
Love for all God's creatures, friend and foe,
Love which shall cover every human fault,
And bring a balm for every earthly woe.

Only a few more hours, we know, for some,
Who in this life have fought a goodly fight;
Henceforth for them remains a glorious crown,
A rest within the radius of God's light.

Only a few more days of willing sacrifice,
Of patient standing when our work is done;
Soon in His radiant presence we'll rejoice,
And praise him in our everlasting home.

KNOWLEDGE INCREASES RESPONSIBILITIES.

--MATT. 11:20-30.--MAY 6.--

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

OUR LORD would seem to have been somewhat disappointed at the result of his ministry, especially in Capernaum, where he had resided a considerable time, and our lesson opens with a warning to the people of Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida, that having been favored with many mighty works and many evidences of Jesus' Messiahship, and that the Kingdom was being offered to them, etc., they would be held correspondingly responsible. As Capernaum had been greatly blessed, highly exalted, or, figuratively, "exalted up to heaven" in its privileges and opportunities, the result to it would be greater degradation, and eventually it would be brought low into the dust--destroyed, "brought down to hell," in the text, signifying brought down to hades, the death-state. And surely this was fulfilled in the trouble which came upon the Jews, and which destroyed their nationality, as a result of their having failed to accept the Messiah and the Kingdom which he offered to establish.

But though our Lord was disappointed that he was so generally rejected, he cannot have expected that he would be widely welcomed by the people. He must have known, as he elsewhere describes to his disciples, quoting from the prophecies, that he would be rejected by Israel, and that the Kingdom offer would pass by them. As a matter of fact his rejection on their part incidentally permitted the sending of the gracious call to the Kingdom honors to believers among the Gentiles, and thus we are favored at the present time.

The contrast which the Master draws between Bethsaida and Chorazin and Tyre and Sidon is a strong one. The latter two were flourishing Gentile cities, yet, as was common in such, very full of wickedness and immorality, so that evidently their names were synonymous for that which was unholy, licentious, unclean. So then, for our Lord to say that if his mighty works had been done in those unholy cities they would have repented long ago in sack-cloth and ashes, that is, with deep contrition, was to say that the people of Bethsaida and Chorazin were in very much worse condition of heart than those Gentiles: further from such a condition as God could bless.

From this we may gather that God takes a different standpoint of viewing such matters from that taken by the majority of people. He does not merely say, Is this a moral or an immoral city? Are these people decent or indecent? The question which the Lord would examine rather would be, What is the heart attitude of this people or that people, this individual or that individual? What is he aiming, striving, for? --how would he be effected thereby if granted clearer light respecting the divine will? Hence, if we look at ourselves, and find that we are not immoral, not coarse, sensual, brutish, but more refined than many others, this is well; it is what we should be in view of our favors, privileges and mercies; but we are to

R2623 : page 135

remember that we might still be very far short of what would be pleasing to the Lord, and that if God should favor us with certain privileges and blessings and opportunities, and we were to reject them, our attitude in his sight might be worse than that of the immoral.

Turning to Capernaum, most favored of all, our Lord contrasts her with Sodom, whose wickedness was very great, so that it brought upon her a fierce destruction from the Lord. Capernaum is clearly told that from the Lord's standpoint of view her people were more wicked, less worthy of divine favor, more worthy of punishment, than the people of Sodom. This was a severe arraignment, and yet, we can see, a just one, for the poor Sodomites, walking in the way of sin, ignorance of God, etc., gradually went down and down, according to the course of fallen nature, while the people of Capernaum had much advantage every way as Jews, whom the Lord had blessed with a knowledge of himself, and to whom now, finally, he had sent Messiah, and whose miracles they had seen repeatedly, and with whose beautiful character and teaching they had been brought much in contact through his considerable residence in their midst.

In view of these privileges and mercies, their rejection of Messiah and failure to grasp their opportunities branded them, so to speak, as being inferior to the Sodomites, in appreciation of righteousness and truth; for our Lord declares that the Sodomites would not have met the end they did had they had similar privileges and mercies bestowed upon them.

The question naturally arises, Why did not our Lord grant the Sodomites as good an opportunity as he granted the people of Capernaum, and why did he not grant the people of Tyre and Sidon, who were still living, as favorable an opportunity as he granted

R2624 : page 135

to the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida? We answer, that none of these people were granted a trial for eternal life. The Sodomites did not have such a trial; the people of Tyre and Sidon had no trial of any kind; nor did the people of Palestine have a trial for life eternal. The trial which they did have was a trial respecting their love for the Lord and for righteousness, and of their readiness to be his people and supporters of his Kingdom. The result of the trial showed that they were not sufficiently in love with righteousness to appreciate the Lord's Kingdom, nor to become its friends and servants; and in consequence of this their city and their land, and they as a people were rejected by the Lord from being his agencies in connection with the establishment of his Kingdom.

That no individual trial for eternal life had yet come to any of these people is evident from several facts: (1) that the whole world was under condemnation through Adam's transgression; (2) that no one could be relieved from that condemnation, so as to have a fresh individual trial for life, until the ransom price was paid, and it was not yet finished; (3) this is further implied by our Lord's statement (verse 24) that there would be a day of judgment future--a day of testing, a day of trial, a day to see who would be worthy of eternal life and who unworthy. (Acts 17:31.) In that judgment day, the Millennial age, all are to have a chance for everlasting life; for the granting of this very chance to all of Adam's race was the very object of our Redeemer's death. Meantime, the people of Bethsaida, Chorazin and Capernaum, having rejected the Lord and having been rejected by him, he nevertheless found some there, and has been selecting others since, of a special class, which he is calling to joint-heirship with himself in that Millennial Kingdom, under whose beneficent reign of righteousness a full and impartial judgment or trial for life shall be granted to all. He would have his hearers understand, however, that in that future trial time the people of Tyre and Sidon and Sodom would be treated with more consideration and allowance than those who, having many more privileges, had hardened their hearts against what they did see and know. "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee," Capernaum.

How scathing was the rebuke of these words, that the people of Sodom, notorious for their wickedness, licentiousness, etc., should find more favor, more tolerance, at the Lord's hand, when he should begin the work of judging mankind, than themselves, who had been God's favored people, but who had not appreciated his favors, and had done despite unto his goodness! But if any infer from this that the people of Capernaum, when they shall be on trial for life during the Millennial age, will be unkindly treated, it

would be a great mistake; because the declaration of the Lord's Word distinctly is that the world shall be "judged in righteousness"--not in wrath, malice, not with a desire to do them injury, but with a desire to do them every good possible--hence it will be "tolerable" for the people of Capernaum in that day--very tolerable--it will be a grand and blessed opportunity for them to come to a full, clear knowledge of the Lord; but it will be still more tolerable for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sins, although greater in some respects, were less heinous in the sight of God--they were less against character, more sins of ignorance.

We may assume, therefore, that during the Millennial age disciplines such people as those of Tyre and Sidon and those of Sodom, who had never known God to any degree, who had never known his laws, will be in a condition of heart much more readily amenable to the influences and requirements of that time than will be some others--the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, who having known more respecting God had misused the opportunities of the present life--who broke down their characters instead of building them.

And these are merely ensamples, for we know that all those that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth--"they that have done good [the saints, the overcomers] unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil [all mankind outside of the saints] unto the resurrection of judgment."--John 5:28,29.

We can readily see, in harmony with our Lord's declaration in this lesson, that many who in the present life have no knowledge and no opportunity may be nothing disadvantaged thereby in that judgment time, but on the contrary may be more susceptible to the good influences of the Kingdom and its laws than some others will be who have had contact with the

R2624 : page 136

light to some extent in the present life, but who have refused it. What a blessed promise is this one, of a future judgment or trial! How much it means to the whole groaning creation, that God, who let the sentence of Adam fall on all without giving them an individual trial, has provided a redemption for all from that first sentence, and has provided that each member of the race shall individually have a trial, a judgment, in due time, at the hands of him who died for all. And then, how favorable the conditions are to be, under which that trial will be granted! Satan is to be bound, and the earth is to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord and his goodness and his gracious arrangements on behalf of his fallen creatures, whom he desires shall not perish, but, if they will,

have eternal life through Christ.

However, as our Lord distinctly intimates (v. 5), these things respecting the coming judgment and the blessed opportunities which shall be accorded to every member of Adam's race, are hidden from the majority --especially do they seem to be hidden from the worldly-wise and prudent, who instead of accepting so gracious a plan, are rather inclined to teach the people that the poor Sodomites went to eternal torment without ever having had a chance, and with no prospect of ever having a chance in the future, although our Lord declares that if they had had as good an opportunity as the people of Capernaum they would have repented with a deep contrition. The wise and prudent are inclined to tell us also that the people of Tyre and Sidon, although not favored with our Lord's blessing, are also to be considered doomed to eternal torment, though they would have repented had they had as good an opportunity as the people of Palestine; and finally they tell us that these people of Palestine, having rejected our Lord, must necessarily be sufferers of eternal torment, and not merely losers of the Kingdom. They fail to see; they are blind to the truth--blinded by the traditions of their religious teachers--as the Jews were.

Then, to add to their confusion, they begin to attempt to apply the Lord's words respecting a day of judgment, and of course interpret it to mean a day of damnation, instead of a day of trial. They fail to note that their claim is that the Sodomites were already in hell, suffering torments of the severest form for nearly two thousand years, at the time our Lord uttered these words. Do they think that the Sodomites could suffer any more after the day of judgment than they describe them as suffering now? What do they understand by the words "day of judgment," anyway? Evidently they have no proper conception of the meaning of the words. They see that our Lord referred it to a future time, and they are hopelessly confused and thoroughly unable to give any reasonable explanation of the matter, either in harmony with God's character or in harmony with their own wretched and God-dishonoring theories.--See DAWN, Vol. I, p.137.

How comforting are our Lord's words, that these things are revealed, nevertheless, to some--to babes, to those who are not great, not wise, according to the course of this world; to those who are of humble mind, ready to be taught of the Lord, instead of wishing to teach the Lord. This great blessing, dearly beloved, is ours, and let us be very careful that we maintain the attitude of childlikeness and simplicity, that we may continue to be taught of God, and to "know the things that are freely given unto us of God." Let us rejoice in them and use them, and let the light shine out to others. The explanation of the fact that

the divine plan is hidden from the great majority of the learned, the doctors of divinity, etc., is that so it has pleased the Father to let "the wise be taken in their own craftiness," and to reveal his purposes to those of an humble mind. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (1 Cor. 3:19.) The Father drew to the Son at the first advent, not the doctors of the law, the scribes and the notables, but certain "Israelites indeed," in whom was no guile, though they were but an humble few. And the same class has received the blessing all down the age.

The Master realized that his special instructions must be toward those whom the Father had given unto him, rather than toward the unready and unwilling ones who would not receive his testimony because not in a proper condition of heart to appreciate. To his faithful disciples, therefore, and to all of the same class since, he declared that all things he possessed he had received of the Father; he claimed nothing of himself; and further, he asserted that no one knew him truly, fully, intimately, but the Father, and that no man knew the Father except himself, the Son, and he to whom the Son revealed him. The average reader gets very little meaning out of this passage at first. The Christian who has been making progress for years, growing in grace and in the knowledge of

R2625 : page 136

the Lord, can appreciate it much better. He realizes that while he had some knowledge about Jesus and about the Father at first, from the very inception of his Christian experience, yet it was a different matter to come to know the Father and to know the Son in the intimate sense, in the sense of becoming well acquainted with them, knowing their mind as one knows the mind, the heart, of an intimate friend. It is a privilege to receive such an acquaintance. It is not to be had by everybody; it requires seeking for and knocking for, and such seeking and knocking implies an earnest desire to have an intimate fellowship and communion. Such a growth in grace should be earnestly sought by all of the Lord's true followers who seek to be his joint heirs in the Kingdom; for without it they cannot make progress. In proportion as we know the Father and know the Son we will love them and seek more and more to do those things which are pleasing in their sight.

COME! WEARY AND HEAVY-LADEN.

Still addressing the same class, and implying that there were some present of the right disposition who had not yet become his disciples, our Lord appealed

to his hearers individually, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The difficulty with most of the people would seem to have been that they were neither weary nor heavy laden, but on the contrary pretty well self-contented. We cannot suppose that physical weariness

R2625 : page 137

and physical burdens was the thought before our Lord's mind, but rather the heart-burden and sin-weariness, which all true Israelites must have felt, if they were honest with themselves.

We are to remember that they were under the Law Covenant, that its requirements were very exacting, and that it made no allowance for weaknesses, imperfections, errors, etc.; consequently, all of those Jews should have felt themselves continually condemned in striving to carry the burden of the Law of Sinai. Not that the law was an unjust one or impossible to be kept by a perfect man, but because all being imperfect and fallen they were unable to keep the Law Covenant. So we may suppose that amongst the Jews at that time, while the majority were professing to be holy, law-keepers, who did no sin, there were some who honestly admitted to themselves and to others that they did not, could not, keep the Law perfectly, and who therefore felt burdened and wearied with their fruitless endeavors. Such felt their need of a burden-bearer, such felt their soul-sickness and need of the good Physician, and to such Jesus addressed himself, inviting them to come to him and receive rest, relief.

This coming to Christ for rest is the first step toward a Christian life; it is justification, the acceptance of him as the satisfaction for our sins; and from the time we thus accept him, as the Apostle declares, we have joy and peace through believing. (Rom. 5:1; 15:13.) But having been thus received and blessed, there is something more for us to do, viz., to learn that there is another burden and another yoke which we should take upon us voluntarily.

A yoke is a symbol of servitude, and so our Lord implies that those who are set free (either from the yoke of the Law Covenant, as were the believing Jews, or from the yoke of Satan, as were the believing Gentiles) should become his servants, should take his yoke, should learn to do his will. A yoke generally is arranged for two, and our Lord speaks of it as his yoke, by which we are to understand that he also is a servant; having come to do the Father's will, and having put on the yoke of servitude, he invites us to become true yoke-fellows with himself in the doing of the Father's will, co-laborers together with Christ in the great work of the world's deliverance from sin and death.

The secret of the ability to wear this yoke, and to have companionship with Christ in his service, and to have as a result a great blessing in our own hearts, a rest unto our souls, lies, he explains, in our learning to be meek and lowly of heart as he was. It will be impossible for those who are proud, haughty, self-willed, ambitious, worldly-wise, etc., to labor in the same yoke with Jesus, or to find the true rest of soul which we properly seek. But if we are meek, teachable, humble-minded, ready to know and to do the Lord's will at any cost, then indeed we shall find rest to our soul's satisfaction--the peace of God which passeth all understanding will rule in our hearts.

We notice a difference between the two rests of vs. 28 and 29. Of the first it is said that the Lord will give it to him who comes to him in faith; of the second, it is said that he finds this rest to his soul through becoming a yoke-fellow with Jesus. And so it is: there are two blessings; the first blessing is that of justification--the joy of having our sins forgiven, realizing ourselves no longer strangers and foreigners from our heavenly Father, but brought nigh by the blood of Christ; the second is the joy which comes more gradually, a fruitage, a grace, a development in the heart, the growing and abiding peace and joy of the holy spirit. This second blessing, however, is attained by very few; the majority of nominal Christians know nothing of it; and yet it is the very object of the calling of this Gospel age, and those who fail to come to the Lord and to take his yoke, and to learn of him, to become thus "copies of God's dear Son," will fail utterly of the special purpose and call of this Gospel age, and will have neither part nor lot in the Kingdom. The blessing of justification by faith is merely to fit and prepare us to take the yoke and to become a co-laborer with the Lord in the Father's service.

This yoke which Jesus invites us to come under with him is a very formidable affair from the standpoint of the world: to them it seems to be a most unreasonable yoke, a most terrible burden--to consecrate life, time, means, everything to the service of God; but from the standpoint of those who have come unto Jesus, and to whom he has spoken peace and rest through justification, the matter is very different. To such it must seem a "reasonable service," that since the Lord has graciously redeemed our lives and our all, we should use what remains of that life to his praise and glory; and after we have fastened the yoke upon ourselves we find that it is an easy one, and that with it any burden, any duty, any trial, any difficulty, any vexation of spirit, any burden of any kind that could come to us, would be light indeed, because of this yoke.

Why? Because those who wear this yoke have the assurances of the divine Word, that all things are

working together for good to them; that the heavier the burden that may be attached the greater will be the blessing and the reward by and by; the more severe the experiences during the present time, the brighter shall be the glory, and the brighter shall be their character and the more sure shall they be of being fitted and polished for the heavenly Kingdom. From this standpoint every burden is light, because our yoke is appreciated, and is so easy, so reasonable; and additionally it is so light because the Lord is with us in this yoke. He is the great Burden-bearer, and will not suffer us to be tempted nor to be pressed with more of the burdens of life than we should probably be able to endure. He is watching out for the interests of all those who take his yoke upon them. Their burdens are his burdens, their trials are his trials, their interests are his interests; yea, all things shall work for good to them because they love him.

Let us remember, however, that the Lord takes no slaves in this way; he does not fasten the yoke upon any; he merely invites us to come, and then to fasten his yoke upon ourselves, to make a full consecration of ourselves to him and to his service.

=====

R2625 : page 138

TWO TYPES OF SINNERS.

--LUKE 7:36-50.--MAY 13.--

"Thy faith hath saved thee."

SIMON was a very common name amongst the Jews, and hence it is not so remarkable that there were two Simons at whose homes Jesus was entertained. It is a little peculiar, however, that there are so many features of similarity connected with the two entertainments--that at both of them our Lord's feet were anointed, etc. (Compare Matt. 26:6-13.) It is supposed that about a year and a half elapsed between the two events, that recorded by Matthew being just prior to our Lord's death, "anointing for my burial."

In this lesson we see Simon, a Pharisee, evidently considerably impressed with our Lord's character and teachings, and more favorably inclined toward him than the majority. He thought it would be pleasant to invite Jesus to dinner, thus to honor him, and possibly have a little notoriety himself in connection with the noted Nazarene.

When our Lord accepted the invitation and attended the dinner Simon treated him kindly and politely, but did not go to any extreme of politeness in his entertainment; perhaps thinking of him as not being

used to special attentions, but rather as being a companion of fishermen and common people generally.

Simon therefore did not salute him with a kiss on his arrival, as was usual with honored guests, for that would have seemed like bestowing too much honor upon an ordinary person whom he, as a Pharisee, was not yet prepared to fully endorse; nor did he send the servant to take off the Master's sandals and to wash his feet, according to the custom of the best entertainers of that time. He may have said to himself, This man and his disciples are not used to being entertained in such style, and my servants would recognize themselves as being on a par at least with any of these men except the Teacher himself. Without, therefore, going to the extremes of polite entertaining, the Pharisee had nevertheless cordially welcomed the Lord to his table, feeling no doubt that in doing this he was honoring the Lord, and not sufficiently realizing that he was the one who was being honored, in the privilege of entertaining so noble a guest. How will Simon regard the matter when, in the resurrection time (during the Millennium), he ascertains that his guest was "the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"?

The Apostle urges upon us all, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels [God's messengers] unawares." The Lord wishes his people to be generous with such things as they have (but not to be vaingloriously extravagant), hence it is written again, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet [proper] and it tendeth to poverty." It is a part of our present lesson to learn of our own mean selfishness, which all have inherited through the fall, and gradually, under the instruction of the Lord's Word, to get the victory over this and become more generous--more like our Father in Heaven.

Let us be specially generous and hospitable toward the "brethren," who really represent the Lord himself; not only as "ambassadors for God," but also as "members of the body of Christ."

The "woman of the city" mentioned, was evidently a common character, widely known to the people of the city, though she might not be known to Jesus and the disciples, who were not residents. Whatever the woman's previous life may have been, she had experienced deep contrition of heart, and a desire to live a better life. She had heard about Jesus, the great Teacher, and that unlike the Pharisees he did not disdain to speak with and to encourage fallen ones and to help them up again. She felt that she would like to go to the Lord in prayer for forgiveness, and would like to make a fresh start in life, to seek thereafter to

live more consistently. She knew not how to approach the matter; she knew not what to say respecting herself; she would merely take a little offering in her hand, and while he was reclining at dinner, after the custom of that time, and while his feet would be easily accessible to her, she would venture to anoint them with the fine ointment which she had brought with her. Saying not a word, her heart too full of utterance, she reached the Master's feet, and there her tears trickled over them. By her tears he should know, more eloquently than she could voice her sentiments in words, what were the true longings of her heart for forgiveness and for reconciliation.

How merciful and considerate of our needs, is the Lord's provision that when we come penitently to his feet for forgiveness we are not required to approach him through another, nor to formulate our petition in some exact form of language--he can read our hearts and accepts our tears and even our humblest efforts to make amends and to serve the "members of his body." And even though he may delay the message of forgiveness it is but to let the roots of penitence and faith sink deeper in our hearts.

Jesus for a time seemed to heed her not, and she may have questioned whether or not he was misunderstanding her motives and her prayer, but the fullness of her heart found vent in still more tears, and tenderly she wiped his feet and anointed them with the ointment. The Pharisee, meantime, was saying within himself: Now it is most fortunate that I invited Jesus to dinner to-day, and it is fortunate that this woman came in; it affords a proof, a test, respecting the ability of Jesus to read the hearts of those about him. If he were a prophet, if he were specially empowered and enlightened of God, he would have known the character of this woman; but he evidently does not know her character, and therefore is permitting her to anoint his feet, and this seems to be a proof that he is not a prophet.

But Jesus, fully conscious of all that was going on, and with a clear knowledge of the heart of the poor woman at his feet, and of the self-satisfied Pharisee who entertained him, was planning a way by which he might do good to both of them--a way by which he might set before all present a great truth. Therefore he put a parable to Simon, saying that a certain creditor had two debtors, the one owing a large amount, the other a small amount, and when they were totally unable to pay he cheerfully and promptly forgave them both. Then our Lord pointed his lesson on this little parable, by enquiring which of

R2626 : page 139

the two forgiven ones would be most appreciative of the creditor's leniency? Simon, who had not as yet

caught the import of the parable, promptly answered that the one who had the largest debt forgiven would undoubtedly be the one who would be most appreciative, and our Lord approved this answer. Then directing attention to the woman, he reminded Simon that although he had been kind in inviting him to dinner, and although he appreciated his attentions, nevertheless the still greater attentions of the woman, and the still greater marks of respect which she had showed, were evidences that while they both loved, the woman loved the more; and the intimation clearly is that the greater love was developed by a greater realization of sin and a greater desire to be relieved from it.

Of course, in one sense of the word, all are sinners, all have come short of the glory of God, and are hopeless without forgiveness; yet the Pharisee occupied a different position from the woman, because under the Jewish Law Covenant he was already occupying a standpoint of typical justification, and was seeking to maintain that standing by living a life of strict regard for the divine Law. On the other hand, the woman, although under the same Covenant, by living an abandoned life in open violation of the Law, had lost her interest in the national typical justification, and was therefore in a much larger sense of the word a sinner. Simon knew very well that while he was trying to keep the Law he was not keeping it perfectly, but infringed it in various ways from time to time, and yet he was not wilfully an infractor of the Law, as was the woman; hence in this sense of the word there was the wide difference between great sin and less sin; yet both needed the Saviour, and if the Pharisee had realized the truth of the matter he needed the Saviour just as much as did the woman; for the Law Covenant could not give him everlasting life--to attain that he must admit his sin and accept forgiveness and salvation from sin and its penalty, death, as a gift from the Saviour who honored him by consenting to be his guest.

Then Jesus turned to the woman and said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven." What words those must have been to her! Her prayer was answered--a prayer, which had arisen in her heart, and which had expressed itself through tears and ointment, had been heard, and she was forgiven and all the past treated as forever blotted out. How thankful she must have felt! Poor Simon, however, so far as we know, did not come to the point of saying, Lord, I also am a sinner, and even though I have loved less than this woman I also need to be forgiven, and I pray for the forgiveness of my sins, that I may be counted one of your followers. No; the very fact that he had a religious standing in the nominal Church, and had made a profession of holiness, seems to have stood in his way, and to have hindered him from accepting the

grace of God and the forgiveness of sins. And so it is right along. How frequently do we see that people who have been living moral lives, evidently seeking to walk in paths of righteousness, are much less prepared to accept forgiveness through the Lord Jesus Christ than are some others who have been living more carelessly and who awaken to a realization of their undone condition, and go to the Lord more contritely and more earnestly, and exercise a greater faith, and feel for him consequently a greater love!

There is no intimation, however, that because of his failure to ask forgiveness, and to become a follower of Jesus, Simon was condemned to "hell," etc.; quite to the contrary, he simply followed the course of his nation (blinded by prejudice and false traditions of men). Their rejection of Jesus lost to them the privileges of joint-heirship in Christ's Kingdom, and led to their national rejection from God's favor until the opening of the Millennial age. Then, as the Apostle clearly shows, their blindness shall be removed and they shall be blest with a much clearer knowledge of the truth. Then the Lord will "pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, and they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and shall mourn because of him." Then when they weep as did the woman with the ointment, God, through the glorified Christ, will have mercy on them and forgive their sins. Then their trial for everlasting life will begin.-- See Rom. 11:25-32; Zech. 12:10.

R2627 : page 139

The other guests at the table were particularly struck with our Lord's declaration that the woman's sins were forgiven her. Not recognizing the speaker to be the Messiah, the Son of God, they questioned the propriety of such words, but this was one reason why our Lord uttered the words; it was one of his unostentatious methods of calling attention to the fact that he was the Messiah, and that as such, and in view of the work which he was yet to do all power to forgive sins was in his hands.

Then he said to the woman, "Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace." He wished her to know that it was not her tears that had brought the forgiveness; that it was not the value of the ointment that had moved him to forgive her, but that the thing which was pleasing in his sight, and on account of which her sins were forgiven, was her faith. She not only realized her own sinful condition, but she had realized that this great Teacher had the power to forgive her and to restore her, and she had trusted, and acted upon this, and our Lord wished her to realize that the reward she had received was because of exercise of this faith. And so we may realize in respect to all of the Lord's favors in the case of each one of his people.

When we come unto the Lord, with tears of penitence, we are to know that they do not prevail; and if we present gifts we are to know that they do not prevail, and that the tears and the offerings could avail us nothing except as we present to the Lord our faith, accepting him as the one who has power to forgive sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And not only is this necessary at the beginning of the Christian way, but similarly faith is necessary all the journey through. If we do not continue in faith we cannot progress. "According to thy faith be it unto thee," would seem to be the Lord's method of dealing with all who are his disciples, from first to last of their Christian walk and experience.

The center of the lesson, then, is abiding faith in the Lord: faith when he seems not to notice us; faith when things seem to be going prosperously with us in our spiritual affairs and in our temporal affairs;

R2627 : page 140

and faith equally strong when the currents and forces seem all to be against us. The victory that overcometh the world is the faith that in all conditions is able to look up to the Lord with absolute confidence in his goodness and faithfulness, and to realize that according to his promise eventually all things will work together for good to us because we are his people.-- 1 John 5:5; Rom. 8:29.

=====

R2627 : page 140

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

MATT. 13:1-8,18-23.--MAY 20.

"The seed is the word of God."--Luke 8:11.

JESUS and his disciples had just returned to Capernaum, his home, from a tour of Galilee, and the multitudes, many of whom had heard him before and witnessed his miracles, gathered about him as he sat on the beach of Lake Galilee, assuredly expecting that they would hear some gracious words from his lips. And the Master never seemed weary of presenting his message, although frequently, as in this case, the mass of his hearers understood but dimly his parables. There was a fishing-boat lying near, quite possibly owned by some of his friends or relatives, and evidently with the owner's consent Jesus used the boat as his pulpit, speaking to the multitude which lined the beach, which at this point is said to rise rapidly, and which therefore would give the general effect of an amphitheatre. A traveler once made

an experiment, to see how well the voice would carry under such circumstances, at this spot, and says, "It was remarkable how distinctly every word was heard, though our voices were not raised, even at three hundred yards off; and it was very easy to comprehend how, in this clear air, a preacher sitting in a boat could address a vast multitude sitting upon the shore."

The Master had no difficulty in finding a topic. Quite possibly his eye rested on a seed-sower, and as a result we have this parable, designed to show that there are different classes of hearers, and that it is not merely the eloquence or force or truthfulness of the message that determines the result, but chiefly the attitude of the heart that hears; hence the importance of the injunction, "Take heed how ye hear"--see that your heart is in a right condition to receive the truth, if you would expect a benefit from it; do not expect that the mere hearing of the truth will profit you, irrespective of your own character conditions.

The good seed of the parable is the Word of God, the truth, even as false teaching, human philosophies and doctrines of devils, are not wheat-seed but tare-seed; our Lord is not showing in this parable what will be the result of sowing good or bad seed, but merely that the good seed can accomplish its work only in certain classes of hearts.

The class of heart that is like the "wayside," solid and compact with selfishness, not open and generous, is very unfavorable ground for the truth; nothing need be expected from such ground. The sower will let as little as possible fall on such, but whatever does fall upon it the Adversary will soon take away. "Wayside" hearers are not necessarily bad people, in the sense of grossly wicked, but they are bad in the sense of being unsuited to the Lord's present work and call. They will need to have the furrow run through them again and again, that troubles of various kinds may make them more generous, more open, more ready for the message. But in many instances the Lord will not run the plowshare of truth through such soil in this present age; rather, he will leave it for the Millennial age, when he will be dealing, not only with these hearts that were partially prepared and which have become unsuitable, but when also he will have a work to do with the great masses of mankind, which, like the virgin forests and prairies of earth, are yet uncleared, unplowed and unbroken. The great time of trouble at the beginning of the Millennial age will be a time, we believe, in which the Lord will run the plowshare of truth in every direction throughout the world, as it is written, "The plowman shall follow close after the reaper." (Amos 9:13.) And, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9), and thus be prepared for the new sowing

time of the new age, under circumstances more favorable in some respects than the present, though less favorable in other respects.

Another class upon which the same good truth falls at the present time is one that has a good appearance upon the surface--fine soil, etc., but underneath, and but a few inches from the surface, is rock. The soil on the surface is but a veneer to hide the rock; it has the appearance of depth of character, sympathy and love, but this is merely a deception. Civilized customs have popularized at least an outward imitation of the graces of the holy spirit, and appearances of good heartedness, but down below in the real heart and intention is selfishness, that would merely follow the ways of righteousness because of popularity or because of some hoped-for gain, but thoroughly unable to appreciate self-sacrifice for anything or anybody. This class of shallow characters sometimes receives the truth with avidity, with joy, and seems to contain some of the truth's most enthusiastic followers; but this is merely for a little while, because of novelty or pride to show off, and not from love of the truth. The selfishness which is the substratum of their character will not permit them to endure hardness for the truth's sake. Consequently, as soon as they find that with the truth always goes something of persecution and tribulation they are surprised, thoroughly disheartened, and all their interest speedily dies out. This class has no hope for the Kingdom either. They are not of the kind that the sower expects will yield a crop to maturity in the present harvest.

The third class of hearers favored by the truth in this present time is referred to by our Lord as "thorny ground." This does not mean poor ground, for the thorns are to be found in the very best of ground, especially the thorns of Palestine, to which our Lord undoubtedly had reference. Of these Prof. Thomson

R2627 : page 141

says, "These thorns are not briar bushes or brambles, but are an after-growth of a variety of thistles, which come up quickly in every wheat-field of Palestine." We may say, then, that every Christian who receives the wheat or word of God into a good and honest heart during this Gospel age is in danger of having it choked with the thorns, and of thus becoming one of the class referred to in the parable, a class that was favored, that had every advantage, but which brought forth no crop worth gathering, because the thorns took possession of it to such an extent as to choke out the wheat-seed.

We have heard Christian people describe the thorns which threaten the good seed in the hearts of God's people to be theaters, card-playing, carousals,

etc., etc., but this is a great mistake; the hearts that are beset with such things are probably not good ground in any sense of the word, and probably have never received the good seed. But how reasonable is the interpretation which our Lord himself gives--the

R2628 : page 141

thorns are the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches--just exactly what every Christian realizes. The cares of this life are not gross immoralities, but the home duties, family cares, business cares, etc. The deceitfulness of riches is not merely the baneful influence which is exercised upon those who possess riches, but especially it represents the snares, the difficulties, the entanglements, the misleadings of efforts to become rich. How many Christian people can testify that their spirituality, their love for the Lord and for the truth and for the Kingdom have been choked in great measure by wealth-coveting and wealth-seeking! How many can testify that the cares of this life have crowded out their fellowship with the Lord, and the power of his word in their hearts, and how as a result their lives are barren, unfruitful of anything in the way of character development, service of God and for the "brethren" and others.

What can such as realize that thorns are growing in their hearts and choking the Word of the Lord do to get rid of them? How can they overcome this difficulty of permitting the cares of this life to absorb their time, their talents, their influence? How can they get rid of the false allurements and attractions of riches? How can they become fruitful toward God in good works, in riches of grace in their hearts and characters, in riches of the knowledge of the divine Word and plan?

It is a difficult matter to get rid of these thorns, if they spring up and get well under way after we have received the wheat, and it will probably be a slow and tedious business to root them out; and one in which we could not hope at all for success by ourselves, unaided. All such must go to the Lord himself for the aid which he alone can give, and the method and process by which the Lord will assist them will be in the transforming of their minds so that they will mind not earthly things but heavenly things, set their affections on things above, not on things beneath, set their affections upon true riches of the divine nature and high calling, instead of on earthly riches, which are but transitory and unsatisfactory, even if attained.--Matt. 6:19-21.

And the way to effect this transforming of the mind, this uprooting of the thorns, is to draw time and attention away from the earthly things in a compulsory manner, limiting the time that we will give to earthly things, and devoting more and more time

to spiritual interests in our own hearts and in the hearts of our families and friends. This will mean more time for the study and practice of the truth; and as the truth comes in it will be found to be the sanctifying power of God which alone can uproot the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, and keep our hearts in the right attitude to bear much fruit to our Master's praise.

The "good ground" hearers are those whose hearts are in good condition, ready for the word of the Lord, plowed and furrowed by experiences. This class, free from thorns, is ready to bring forth an abundant harvest, and yet even of this class all may not yield the same amount of fruitage to our Master's sowing, for he represents that some will bring forth thirty, some sixty and some an hundred fold. He does not speak slightly of those which bring forth but the thirty fold, but leaves it to us to discern that those who bring forth the hundred fold are the most pleasing in his sight. We have much to do with this matter of the amount of fruitage which we yield to the Lord; it will be measured by the degree of our zeal, our love for him; consequently the class bringing forth the hundred fold represents those Christians who love the Lord the most fervently, whose hearts are warmest for him, his truth and his people. The Apostle Paul was undoubtedly one of this hundred-fold class, the Apostle Peter was another, and no doubt there have been many in humble positions unknown to fame, whose love for the Lord, and zeal for his cause have been counted to them as hundredfold return for every seed of truth they received. Let us each with more and more care seek to bring forth much fruit, and as one means to this end to keep down the thorns and everything that would choke or hinder the influence of the truth in our hearts, in our daily lives, and in our words. Let us cultivate the seed and not the thorns.

THE MESSAGE OF THE KINGDOM.

Luke says, "The seed is the Word of God"; Matthew says, "The word of the Kingdom." Our Lord no doubt used both expressions--the good seed is God's word or message of the Kingdom. Indeed, the message of the Kingdom may be said to be the only message God has yet given to mankind as a message of hope. He intimated the Kingdom to Abraham when he promised him that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed; the intimation was that Abraham's seed should be blessed by being granted Kingdom powers which should prove a blessing to the world at large. Israel, at the time of this parable, was hoping to attain this very promise.

All the promises through the prophets pertain to the Kingdom, the time when it shall be established,

the blessings which shall flow from it to the uttermost parts of the earth, when all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, when righteousness shall flourish throughout the world, and when sin and sinners and Satan himself will be subjected to the powers of righteousness, in the hands of the Messiah. At

R2628 : page 142

the time of the utterance of this parable the seed, word or message of the Kingdom had taken on a special form, viz., an invitation to some to become joint-heirs with the Messiah, the heir of the Kingdom.

Whoever has never heard anything about the Kingdom has never heard anything about the gospel, for it is the "gospel of the Kingdom," as our Lord declared. Hence we see that much of the preaching of eternal torment and other things falsely called the Gospel of the Kingdom, are delusions which are not of God, not his word, not the good seed that would bring forth the good fruit. The false messages have brought forth "tares" in abundance. This good seed of the Kingdom it is that rightly received into a good heart cannot be easily choked with earthly hopes or ambitions--for the Kingdom hope is above all, grand, pre-eminent, soul-satisfying. The Kingdom hope is as an anchor to the soul, and does not permit the cares of this life to seem large and to crush it out. On the contrary, to honest hearts which have received the good seed of the Kingdom the cares of this life are merely incidental trials which are to be overcome, that thereby character may be formed, much fruit brought forth, to the Lord's praise, and a share in the Kingdom attained. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself," and bringeth forth much fruit.

=====

R2628 : page 142

NEWS FROM THE "BRITISH BRANCH."

You will all be glad to learn of the safe arrival of Brother Henniges and wife at their destination. A "pilgrim" trip to the principal centers of interest was made while word was sent to the home office respecting the British postal laws, etc., bearing on the work proposed to be done there. Much interest was found at various points and the friends of the truth, we may well hope, were edified and enthused.

We were surprised and rather disappointed to find that British postal laws are much less favorable than our own. However, the Lord pointed out to us (we believe) a manner of adapting our work to the laws as they stand which we doubt not will accomplish a great work there this year. At all events we have resolved

to try it for the remainder of this year at least (D.V.) and accordingly an office will be opened at once and soon as possible the address will appear in the WATCH TOWER. We have prepared over four tons of reading matter for shipment, part of which has probably already reached London, and the remainder is now on the ocean.

The following from London will be interesting:--

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--You did not overestimate the matter which in your last you termed a "pleasant surprise" for British brethren. Bro. Henniges' visit to us is indeed a joyful privilege and to hear him set forth things "new and old" is a pleasure that words cannot describe. We certainly feel that there is scope for much work on the lines that our brother has come over to adopt, if the way be made plain to him by the Lord.

Of course it is not for us to urge or push this matter unduly, however much we feel it would gratify us, but this we can offer, that if the Lord makes plain the way to you and him our sympathies can then take practical form. These are my personal feelings, but I know I am only voicing those of many of our dear brethren here. It would have done your heart good to have seen the little gatherings of glad faces at the last four or five meetings; to feel the warm, sympathetic hand-grasps and the cheery, honest words of encouragement and the earnest God-speeds given to our dear Bro. Henniges and his dear wife. Not but that we always have joy in meeting together and great joy indeed, but this joy seems a super-added one--a joy abounding.

We give thanks to our Lord that he has made you such a channel of blessing to us, and we pray that our

R2629 : page 142

eyes and hearts may be anointed and that we may be given that discerning spirit which discriminates between that which harmonizes with and that which militates against our Father's revealed plan. So with the boldness and assurance born of sad experience we can confidently approach our Father's throne with requests according to his will.

If there are any suggestions from you to us as to how we may aid in this present scheme for additionally helping our English brethren we shall be glad to hear from you. In the meantime we are one with you in this gospel of the Kingdom, in unity of spirit, in the bond of love and in righteousness of life.

Yours in our present Lord,
BRO. AND SISTER GUARD.

=====

R2629 : page 142

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

ABOUT MAGNETIC--HYPNOTIC CURES, ETC.

Question.--The world is full of aches and pains, disease, and naturally we look about us for relief. You have already expressed your judgment that the cures effected by Christian Scientists and Spiritualists are probably produced by improper spiritual influences, altho exercised to some extent at least in harmony with natural laws. I desire now to inquire respecting cures by hypnotism, and still other cures by so-called magnetic healers. What shall we think of these, and will it be proper for the Lord's consecrated people to avail themselves of such means for attaining health?

Answer.--We feel suspicious of magnetic and mental healing. In our judgment they in many instances are allied with or related to hypnotism; yet it is particularly difficult to draw the line here, because we all know that there is such a thing as a legitimate mental influence which we all exercise upon one another, favorably or unfavorably. We know, for instance, that hope and faith, love and joy, are healing

R2629 : page 143

and helpful influences, and that doubt and despair, anger and malice, are injurious influences, whether exercised by our own minds upon our own bodies, or upon others. In this proper sense of the word every child of God possessing the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, is a mental healer, and a heart healer, a wound healer; wherever he or she may be, the influence will be uplifting, comforting, strengthening to good impulses. If therefore the Lord's consecrated ones visit the sick, their presence should be a refreshment, comforting, cheering and helpful, and so much the more if they carry in their hearts and communicate with their lips the exceeding great and precious promises of our Father's Word. With this much of mental healing we are most thoroughly in accord.

But Christian Science, Mind Healing and Magnetic Healing, running upon this same line, seem to us to carry it to an extreme--in the case of Christian Science to the extreme of lying to oneself and believing the lie, and thus gradually becoming a liar, self-deceived and deceiving others in respect to all of life's affairs. We cannot believe that any course so opposed to that which the Scriptures mark out can be of God, nor can we believe that the cures it at times effects are either natural or of God; we can only suppose, therefore, that the Adversary favors this lying and deceiving process to the intent that he may beguile

the mind through further lies and deceptions far from God and the truth.

Magnetic Healing is more on the order of hypnotic healing; that is to say, the magnetic healer gains a control over the mind of his subject which is somewhat akin to the control gained by mesmerists and hypnotists, and akin to the spirit control of spiritualism over its mediums. We can have no sympathy with anything of this kind, for even if we were satisfied that the power of control was merely a human power and not a Satanic one (and we are not satisfied of this), we cannot feel that it is right for one human being to subject his mind, his will, to another, when the evidences prove that every such subjection decreases his will power and places the subject more and more in the position of a slave or machine, subject to the influence or control of others--breaking down his personality.

The Lord's people are admonished to make such a submission of their minds to the Lord, and no one else; and we are confident that the Lord will take no advantage of us under such conditions, to rob us of any good quality. On the whole, then, we urge all of the Lord's people to be on guard against mind healers, magnetic healers, etc., especially where, as in the case of Christian Science, the mind is to be given up to believe a lie, or in the case of hypnotism, it is to be given up or subjected entirely to another. Our minds are our greatest possession, and are to be given only to the Lord and to each other as directed by the Word of the Lord; and if we cannot have health without violating these principles, we can afford to be without the health for the few more days that remain under the present conditions, knowing that by and by, if faithful to the Lord, we shall have the perfect resurrection bodies promised.

WHO IS BORN OF GOD?

Question.--In 1 John 5:1 we read, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Does this signify that we are begotten of the spirit at the same moment that we are justified through faith?

Answer.--No; the Apostle, in the words quoted, is not attempting to give the complete philosophy of salvation, that being given in other parts of his own testimony, and that of the other apostles. He is discussing the condition of a believer who has not only been justified through faith, but who, continuing to be a believer, is acting upon that faith and the Lord's call which comes to the justified, and who, in harmony with that justification and call, has presented himself a living sacrifice to the Lord, and has been begotten of the Holy Spirit. He is still a believer, must always

continue to be a believer, must always continue to maintain his faith, which is the foundation of his reckoned new nature in Christ.

The word here rendered "born" should be rendered "begotten;" it is the same word in the Greek as the word rendered "begotten" following it in the same verse.

Numerous Scriptures show us that our condition as sinners is such that we cannot be begotten of God through his holy spirit until after we have been justified through faith. As sinners we were "children of wrath even as others," and were "called to repentance" (but not called to the "high calling"): as repentant sinners we are pointed to the Lord Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life, by whom alone we can return to harmony with the Father. When we accept Christ as our Savior and his sacrifice as our ransom price we are justified by faith--reckonedly perfected--and have peace with God, and realize that we are no longer children of wrath, aliens, strangers and foreigners, being brought nigh by the blood of Christ. Our justification, however, is not our begetting to new nature, but, as the Word itself signifies, a making right of our old natures --a compensating on our Lord's part for the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh which are ours through the fall, so that we are reckoned as tho we were perfect men--like father Adam before he sinned.

It is to such justified or reckonedly perfect men and women that the Lord sends the "high calling" of this Gospel age--a call to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, a call to suffer with him for righteousness' sake in this present time, with a promise of sharing with him glory, honor and immortality in the future, of being joint-heirs with him in the Kingdom which is to bring restitution blessings to all mankind.

The call of this Gospel age is to find the "Royal Priesthood," of which our Lord Jesus is the Head or Chief Priest, and all his faithful ones the under priests. The work of this priesthood is especially future--during the Millennial age the instruction, guidance and teaching of the world of mankind. The call to this priesthood includes two things: (1) A call in the present time to faithfulness even unto sacrifice, and none can be in this priesthood except he offers up himself a willing sacrifice in the divine service. (2) It includes the

R2629 : page 144

glorification that shall follow the exaltation of the sacrificers.

The thing which each is to sacrifice is himself, his will, his life, his all (Heb. 8:3; Rom. 12:1); but God cannot accept to his holy altar any blemished sacrifice, and hence he has not invited sinners to sacrifice themselves --for they are all blemished. None but our Lord

Jesus, therefore, could be actually acceptable as a sin-offering on Jehovah's altar; hence the provision is that his church, called to present their bodies living sacrifices, and to thus have fellowship in Christ's sufferings, and by and by in his glory, must first be "justified freely from all things" by the merit of Christ's sacrifice, before they could be accepted as sacrificers "holy and acceptable to God" or in any degree come within the limitations of the high calling.

Altho the Apostle, in the verse you quote, does not particularize the three steps of (1) knowledge, (2) faith and (3) consecration, he nevertheless implies them, as will be noticed from the context: vss. 3 and 4 tell us that the class the Apostle refers to are overcomers of the world, and that they seek to keep God's

R2630 : page 144

commandments, and do so willingly, not feeling them "grievous." Thus we see that he is speaking only of the consecrated class; and since we know that there were none righteous,--no, not one,--of all of Adam's race, and since we know also that the unrighteous could not be accepted as joint-sacrificers with Christ, we know assuredly that the Apostle John had in mind a class of consecrated and spirit-begotten ones, who previously had been prepared by a knowledge of Christ and by a faith in him unto justification.

That "new creature" represented by the new mind which is now begotten of the holy spirit when the justified believer reaches that point where he sacrifices the human will and presents himself unreservedly to the Lord, is merely "begotten." The present life is the formative period during which there is no independent life, but merely the reckoned one of our "mother," the Abrahamic Covenant. (Gal. 4:23-31.) Our birth will be in the First Resurrection, when we shall be "born from the dead." Then we shall have life and our mother covenant will be dead, having borne the promised seed that shall bless all nations. Compare Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5.

HOW WILL THE DEAD HEAR?

Question.--What is implied by the expression, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and they that hear shall live"?--John 5:25.

Answer.--The Greek text seems to be in full harmony with the English, and neither can be understood logically and in harmony with other Scriptures, except by understanding this to mean that the dead of mankind shall be awakened to such a condition as will permit them to hear, comprehend, understand, tho they will still be dead from the divine standpoint--dead in

trespasses and sins--dead in the sense of being still under divine sentence of death. Then after hearing, comprehending, if they respond to the hearing, if they obey the voice, the command, the instruction, of that day of judgment, they shall eventually attain to perfection of life--being raised to the living point gradually by the processes of restitution or resurrection, by (through) judgments, during the Millennium.

The fact is simply this, that a fall took place, a fall from a certain standing or condition of perfection and life and a redemption was provided at Calvary, on account of which there may be extended to all who fell an opportunity to rise again. The rising, be it never so insignificant in its beginning, must go on to completion --until the subject shall have been raised out of death into life. This raising up is necessarily up to the point or condition from which the fall occurred, and anything short of that would not be in the proper sense of the word a raising out of death and to perfection of life.

When considering the word anastasis it is proper that we should interpret it along this line, which is its only true and logical meaning, and if it were in any place used in a less comprehensive sense, it would evidently be the exceptional use of it, and should not militate against its full meaning.

But let us look for a moment at the resurrection of the just ones and the resurrection of unjust ones. There will be no question as to the resurrection of just ones, that to them anastasis means a perfect raising up to perfect conditions in the First Resurrection. Likewise, we claim, is its meaning in respect to unjust ones. It does not say that all of the unjust ones will be raised up, and other Scriptures show that this will not be the case, but that only such of the unjust ones as will conform themselves to the laws of the Kingdom will thus be raised up, and that others will fall back when but partly raised up and suffer Second Death;--those who refuse to hear (obey) their Lord in that day. Compare Acts 3:23.

JOINING TRADE UNIONS.

Question.--Can I consistently join a Trade Union?
I prefer to be free, but am threatened with loss of employment unless I join one.

Answer.--The Lord's injunctions are specifically along the lines of religion, and hence our separateness from unions should be specially along this line. A trade union has nothing of a religious worship connected with it, as have the churches and some of the secret orders. Of course, as those who are free indeed in Christ, we would prefer not to incur any obligation except to the Lord, but if obliged to join a Trade

Union to obtain employment, I think you would do right to join one. I would, however, state to them that I preferred not to join them (not for the sake of the dues, being quite willing to pay my share of maintaining the proper price of labor), but from a desire to be free, lest at some time the Union might wish to dictate to my conscience what would not agree with it. I would therefore give them notice at once that I would be obedient to the demands of the Union so far as my conscience agreed, and that only.

=====

page 145

VOL. XXI. MAY 15, 1900. No. 10.

CONTENTS.

Views From the Watch Tower.....	147
A Zionist's View of Jesus.....	147
Methodism More Democratic.....	148
"With a Lie in Its Right Hand".....	148
Progress of the Truth in China.....	150
Parables of the Kingdom.....	151
The Wheat and the Tares.....	152
The Parable of the Mustard Seed.....	153
The Parable of the Leaven.....	154
The Harvest Plenteous--The Laborers Few.....	154
A Wicked Woman and a Weak Man.....	156
Faithful Co-Laborers Heard From.....	159
Congratulations--British.....	146
The Volunteer Service.....	146

page 146

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

--ADDRESS TO--

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY,
"BIBLE HOUSE," 610, 612, 614 ARCH ST., ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$1.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, N.Y. DRAFT, MONEY ORDER, OR REGISTERED.
FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL
TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:--

Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity or adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER will be supplied FREE, if they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list continually.

=====

BRITISH BRANCH NO. 131 GIPSY LANE, FOREST GATE,
LONDON EAST, ENGLAND.

=====

R2632 : page 146

CONGRATULATIONS TO BRITISH FRIENDS.

We have pleasure in announcing to the friends in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales that our London branch office is open at the address given above. It is or will shortly be well stocked with DAWNS, booklets, tracts and WATCH TOWERS. This will greatly convenience you all, we are sure, not only saving time but also postage, and permitting you to use domestic instead of foreign Money Orders.

Volunteer orders will be filled from there also and we hope to hear as a consequence of many fresh enlistments in this branch of the service.

Any who feel disposed to enter the Colporteur work in Great Britain are invited to write there for full instructions how to work, where to work, terms, etc., etc.

Friends there desirous of visits from "Pilgrims" to hold public and parlor meetings in Great Britain are also invited to write. Address all such letters to

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY,
131 Gipsy Lane, Forest Gate, London E., England.

THE VOLUNTEER SERVICE.

This work is now nobly started and just in time, we trust, to see it well accomplished before July, when so many church attendants are apt to absent themselves for the summer. The brethren and sisters engaging in this service seem to be profiting by it spiritually themselves and it is difficult to conceive of any other form of preaching present truth that could be more effective. The fact that this matter is handed out by Christian gentlemen and ladies adds to the weight and force of the matter circulated. The results cannot be even approximated this side the veil.

Order more "ammunition" as you find you will need it. We have a good supply now. But be careful, please, not to order more than you will faithfully and promptly use--for it is expensive. Letters on this subject should have the word "Volunteer" at the head, and "Order No. 2" or "Order No. 3" as the case may be. Initial orders should invariably be made out along the line mentioned in March 1st TOWER.

=====

R2630 : page 147

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

A ZIONIST LEADER'S VIEW OF JESUS.

DR. MAX NORDAU, a widely known Hebrew leader, not long since in reply to a question concerning his view of Jesus, wrote the following:--

"The picture of Jesus as we have it given by the synoptic gospels is a vague outline and is a typical and ideal Jewish character. He observed the law; he taught the morality of Hillel--love thy neighbor as thyself--he constantly occupied himself with matters of eternity; he felt himself in spiritual communion with God; he despised that which was mortal in his being and all the accidental things of this life on earth. All these are characteristic peculiarities of the best Jews of the time of the Roman supremacy, especially of the Essenes. And as to his origin and ethical physiognomy, there, too, the language of Jesus was throughout Jewish. For all of his parables, parallels can be found in greater or less abundance in the Talmud. His prayer, the most beautiful that a believer ever formulated, is the quintessence of Jewish ideas concerning the relations between man and his Creator. The Sermon on the Mount is the substance of rabbinical ethics; its figures and comparisons are common among the rabbis.

"Jesus is soul of our soul, as he is flesh of our flesh, and who, then, could think of excluding him from the people of Israel? St. Peter will continue to be the only Jew who will say of this descendant of David: I know not the man! If the Jews have not to the present time paid that tribute of public honor to the exalted moral beauty of the character of Jesus, the ground for this is to be sought in the fact that those who tormented them did so in his name. The Jews concluded what the Master was from the doings of the disciples. This was a wrong, but it was pardonable on the part

R2631 : page 147

of those who were eternally the objects of the never-ending hatred of so-called Christians. But every time that a Jew went back to the original sources concerning Jesus and learned to study Christ without regard to his followers, he was compelled to exclaim in amazement: Without accepting his Messianic claims, this man is of us! He honors our race and we claim him as our own, as we also claim the synoptic gospels as examples of genuine Jewish literature.

"And the revision of this trial? This had been done long since. The most learned specialists in the department of Jewish legal procedure have proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that the trial of Jesus, as tradition reports it, could never have taken place before a Jewish court of law. If Jesus was condemned

to death, it was done by the Roman judge, and no Jew, faithful to his law, had the least thing to do with it.

"Jesus would never have been condemned to death on the cross before a Jewish court, as this method of punishing criminals was not allowed by the Jewish law; and it never could have taken place on a Friday, the evening before the Passover, as the law stringently forbade any execution on that day. If the Jews had condemned Jesus after the manner reported by tradition, then they would have committed a series of crimes, each of which would have been severely punished by the Jewish law. It is accordingly certain that the whole story of the trial of Jesus can be nothing but an act of vengeance intended to punish the Jews for not having recognized the divine mission of Christ."

This is interesting as showing the change that has come over the people who cried, "His blood be upon us and upon our children!" The Doctor's expression is falling into line with the Prophet's declaration of what must soon be the attitude of the Jews as a people, viz., "They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him as one mourneth for an exceptional son."

Undoubtedly the best reading matter for the Jew is the New Testament, whose simple Gospel narrative and whose masterful Pauline arguments refer him freely to the Old Testament and show prophecy and fulfilment, type and antitype. However, we are not to expect Israel's blindness to fully depart before the divinely

R2631 : page 148

appointed time;--when the elect Gospel Church shall have been completed and glorified. Nor are we then to expect their blessing and enlightenment except through the great trouble in which they will share with all others, and out of which they shall be saved and blest by the glorified spiritual Israel.--
Rom. 11:25-27,31.

METHODISM MORE DEMOCRATIC.

The basis of the Methodist Episcopal Church is hierarchical, exclusive, all power and authority being vested in the hands of the "clergy." But for some years public sentiment has been growing in favor of a more democratic arrangement, culminating in a demand that the "laity" be granted equal representation and voice with the ministers and bishops in the regulation of the M.E. Church's affairs.

The ministers were loth to part with any measure of their "authority" and power, but finding the "laity" persistent they have with as good grace as possible

finally yielded the point, as the following dispatch from the General Conference at Chicago shows:--

"CHICAGO, May 2.--The pulpit and the pew will hereafter share equally in the highest governmental body of the Methodist Episcopal church. Without a dissenting vote the General Conference, which opened at the Auditorium to-day, ratified the action of the annual conferences in extending equal representation to the laity. The 157 provisional delegates were admitted without a contest.

"The step taken makes the Methodist church a democratic body, and the rule of the preacher passes with the century. As the roll was made up to-day there are 356 preachers and 236 laymen on the regular list. At least 50 reserve laymen will close some of the breaches in the delegations."

Radical as this step is, it has little meaning and will have little effect in the affairs of Methodism, and it is because the preachers realize this that they yield the point without special contest. They well know that the name and form of liberty and power are all that their "laity" care for or know how to appreciate. So long as the preachers can keep "their people" in ignorance on the subject of hell, etc., they can manipulate them just as well in conference as elsewhere.

* * *

A memorial has been drafted for presentation to this General M.E. Conference requesting that the strictures of the Methodist Discipline against dancing, theater-going, etc., be expunged.

The Methodist "tares" know that they have just as much right to such things as the Presbyterian "tares" and the Baptist "tares;" and though they have been enjoying the interdicted amusements for years and intend to continue so to do whether the conference cancels the prohibition or not, yet somehow they would feel just a little more free if the words were not there. Not that their consciences are very tender on the subject, but that it gives some of the "wheat" class an opportunity to upbraid them and seems a curtailment of their "tare" privileges and pleasures.

And why should not the General Conference grant the request and expunge the article so obnoxious to the "tare" element? The Methodist "wheat" need no such restrictions even as the Presbyterian and Baptist and other "wheat" need them not. After all, the "tares" are not "the children of the Kingdom" and why should such restrictions give some of them more of a deceptive appearance of being "wheat"? Let them do what they will--the wider the difference between "wheat" and "tares" the better, and the more speedy the separation, now that the harvest time of separation has come.

PRESBYTERIANISM STANDS
"BEFORE GOD AND MAN WITH A LIE IN ITS RIGHT HAND"

SAYS ONE OF ITS ORDAINED MINISTERS.

"Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee," saith the Lord. And they gnawed their tongues [chewed their words] in pain, but continued to blaspheme [slander, misrepresent] the God of heaven.

The commotion amongst Presbyterians continues --some standing firm for their church creed, others repudiating it and begging to be released from it, but not noble-minded enough to step out into liberty in Christ (as they might so readily do) because of the cost of that liberty in name, salary, etc. Many thus indirectly confess that they despise the chain wherewith they are bound, and have despised it for years, and have realized it to be a lie and a blasphemy against God, and after confessing to this acting and confessing a lie for years they beg to be released without cost or loss either of human or divine favor, and especially without loss of bread and butter.

Note the expression of Rev. Samuel T. Carter in a Presbyterian journal--The Evangelist. He says:--

"It must be admitted that if a church is honest, that which stands in its Confession is its faith. It must be acknowledged that what is contained in its Confession is the faith of any honest church. The Westminster Confession of Faith is still the unquestioned Confession of the Presbyterian Church. Is the Presbyterian Church honest in its zeal for purity first and peace afterward?...

"Be it known, then, to all the world that the Presbyterian Church by its Confession declares that all the heathen perish, that many men are hopelessly lost from all eternity by the decree of God, and that there are infants in hell....In reality the church does not believe these dreadful doctrines. Then it

R2631 : page 149

stands before God and man with a lie in its right hand."

The Independent, a high-class religious journal of Westminster proclivities, makes some very sensible remarks on the situation as follows:--

"The time for removal of error is always; and now revision of some sort begins to be exigent. The Presbyterian Church is suffering for it. The arguments for it are those of truth and charity; the argument against it is that it will delay union with the Southern Presbyterian Church, which is not yet ready

for revision. But we doubt very much if revision is the best course to be pursued. Let the old Confession remain as a historical document. It expressed the views of the Westminster Assembly. It answered its purpose then. It was a noble but faulty document. It gave forth all the light its makers had. Put it where it belongs, as an expression, not of what we must believe, but of what its makers believed. They did grandly to express their own faith, but they had no right to enslave our faith, any more than God has a right to enslave our will. There is no nobler intellectual work that a man can do than to formulate what he believes about God. Theology is the noblest of the sciences--a man of intelligence ought never to tire of making creeds for himself. He ought to revise his creed every year. A man's conduct, and so his religion, depends on what he believes about the relation between God and man. More evidence, more discovery, more study, more enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, will change his belief, his creed, and so affect his religious duty. We would leave the formulation of a creed to each man's own conscientious study."

We are surprised and gratified to have so able a journal as *The Independent* come forward thus boldly in advocacy of a view we have been seeking to promulgate

R2632 : page 149

for years; namely, that each individual Christian should have his own creed, his own faith or belief respecting the things which God has revealed to his people by his spirit through his Word;--and that each Christian should keep adding to his knowledge and his faith daily from the inspired record, the Bible, using all the helps obtainable to this end. This is the thought of the Apostle when he speaks of growth in grace and knowledge and approach to the stature of manhood in Christ. He suggests that the beginner in the Christian way is but a "babe" who needs "the sincere milk of the Word that he may grow thereby," and that when further advanced he will need the "strong meat" of truth which is for the more matured.

With such an arrangement there is no room for the methods in vogue among Christians of all denominations which just now is causing Presbyterianism so much trouble--namely, the fixing by the Doctors of Divinity of each denomination of a creed (claimed to contain all the "milk" as well as all the "strong meat" of God's Word) which each "babe" as it is received is required to swallow, and which it is instructed will supply all the spiritual nutriment proper for it to receive to the end of life. Such doses or pills are administered by every sect--some sugar-coated to conceal the real contents from the "babe," and some like the Presbyterian creed, plain, honest and terribly bitter.

A gentleman in Allegheny related to us his conversation

with a Presbyterian pastor before his withdrawal from that church. The gentleman said, "Pastor, I find many things in our Confession of Faith which upon now more mature consideration I cannot endorse nor continue to be identified with, unless you can help me to reason them out." The pastor replied, "My dear brother, you are getting at this matter from the wrong stand-point; our Confession must be swallowed whole or not at all. It is like a Brandreth pill; if you attempt to chew it [reason it out] you can never swallow it."

How strange that the simple and rational way of feeding "milk" and then "meat," which affords both pleasure and nourishment, should have been discarded for the wickedly injurious practice of imposing upon the "babes" doctrinal pills which not only afford no nourishment but which hinder all growth, and as a result has filled Churchianity with "babes" who as respects spiritual things have never had their senses exercised to discern the true from the false and are utterly unable to follow the Apostle's counsel to "rightly divide the word of truth" and to "try the spirits" (doctrines) whether they be of God or are human fabrications.

A SIMPLE CONFESSION NECESSARY.

However, a simple public confession is necessary to demonstrate who are "babes" in Christ--to distinguish such from "children of this world." But this confession should be very simple--so that the merest "babe" in Christ could comprehend and fully endorse it as his own. (1) It should declare faith in Christ as a personal Savior: that he was sent of the Father and gave his life a ransom for all mankind. (2) A personal acceptance of him as a personal Savior and a determination to forsake sin. (3) A full consecration to be a follower of Jesus in every respect and to lay down life itself in his service. Whoever could not confess these should not be esteemed a "babe" in Christ at all--nor be fed as such, nor expected to grow up into Christ in all things.

May we expect the Church nominal to follow this program--or that the voice of the Independent will be more potent than our own in bringing to pass such conditions? By no means. Churchianity contains too many "tares" and not enough "wheat" for such suggestions to be impressive. She will soon go down in the great time of trouble; and not until the Kingdom

R2632 : page 150

has been set up need we expect a better general arrangement. Then it will apply not to the elect Church, which will then be completed and glorified, but to the Restitution class, then being developed.--Acts 3:19-21.

PROGRESS OF THE TRUTH IN CHINA.

OUR dear Brother Randle, formerly a Baptist missionary in China, has been with us at Allegheny for about a month, and we have learned to love him dearly as one of the Lord's "brethren." He has written for the TOWER a little sketch of his recent experiences in receiving the Truth and of his efforts to let it shine forth in turn to others. We know it will be appreciated. The brother's depth of interest is well attested by his long journey of 16,000 miles to Allegheny. He proposes spending the remainder of his earthly life in sounding the Jubilee Trumpet--the Gospel of the Kingdom. He will probably select Great Britain, his former home, as his future field for harvest work--preaching, and colporteuring the DAWNS.

Before leaving this country he has consented to do some "Pilgrim" work. He is now visiting a number of little gatherings in Ohio and western Pennsylvania, and later on will meet with the churches at Washington, Baltimore, Richmond, Philadelphia, New York City, etc., including some on the Hudson River. We confidently assure him a most hearty welcome from all WATCH TOWER readers he may be permitted to meet. His article follows:

PRESENT TRUTH IN THE FAR EAST.

There has been in China for years one solitary witness for the present truth, Miss Downing, of Chefoo. This lady was formerly a missionary of the Presbyterian Board and she chanced to meet with a stray WATCH TOWER, about the year 1883, in which she read an article on restitution, and at once decided to subscribe for the paper. She was the means of leading Mr. Fuller (whose letter is published at the end of VOL. III.) to study the DAWNS which proved so great a blessing to him. He died in 1894.

Amongst the missionaries of Shantung I am afraid Sister Downing was considered a queer old lady having some odd notions. She prevailed on me, however, to subscribe in 1892 for the WATCH TOWER and to get the Diaglott. The latter I much wanted. I read a little here and there in the TOWER, but too rashly concluded that it was the organ of some kind of universalism, which I did not want to corrupt my orthodoxy, so threw them aside.

I was too much afraid of the word "Universalism."

Now I know that some things are universal.
God's sunshine is universal; it shines from pole to
pole, upon both the just and the unjust. So is his

R2633 : page 150

love. (John 3:16.) Light and truth are yet to be universal
(John 1:9; Isaiah 11:9), and so is the testimony
of the ransom. (1 Tim. 2:6; John 12:32.) Because
of my prejudice then I continued four years longer in
darkness.

Toward the end of that time I saw MILLENNIAL
DAWN advertised in the London Times, and having
been interested for years in the Lord's return, I
had a growing desire to read that book. In the summer
of 1896 Miss Downing lent me VOL. I., but a day
or two later I received another copy from England,
sent to me (without my request) by my dear mother.
I returned Miss Downing her copy, and starting for
my mission station, four days journey from Chefoo, I
first read the PLAN OF THE AGES in a mule-litter. It
wonderfully opened my eyes, and I became more and
more astonished at the beautiful Bible exegesis it revealed.
Later on I received VOLS. II. and III., and continued
to read with admiration. In November of the
same year I wrote my first letter to Allegheny, asking
for the TOWER, and more information of any kind
along the same lines. After reading the three volumes
myself, I read them again with my wife, and
afterwards with my children, and God has been graciously
pleased to lead both my wife and my eldest
daughter into a joyous reception of the present truth.

In 1897 I began to speak with my missionary colleagues
about the character of the Judgment Day, for
I was rejoicing in the strong consolation it gave me
to see that God's purposes regarding the heathen--to
give them a gracious and full opportunity to enter into
life--were infinitely more grand and beneficent than
I had ever dreamed.

When the question of the Trinity loomed up it
gave me a temporary shock, but I soon saw that I
should neither honor the Father nor the Son by making
the Lord Jesus more than the Bible clearly teaches,
when examined without prejudice: and I recognized
not only that all men should "honor the Son even as
they honor the Father," but also that it was the supreme
will of the Father to have it so.

In 1898, being persuaded that this testimony is
from God, and is in conflict with nominal Christianity,
I did not consider it necessary to confer with flesh and
blood, but resigned my connection with both the Baptist
Church and the Mission Board with which I was
connected. Being now free from the creeds and traditions
of men my first desire was to tell to others

R2633 : page 151

the truth that had given me such comfort and joy.

I was able to hold about a dozen meetings among missionaries in several stations, but my principal effort to reach the missionaries of the far East had to be done by correspondence, for they are scattered over thousands of miles of country, in some 500 different stations. For this purpose I had a circular letter printed (a copy of which appeared in the TOWER, June 15, 1899, page 157). To each of these letters we added something further in writing, and enclosing one or more tracts, sent them all out by letter post, which we considered to be much more likely to command a reading than if the whole thing had been printed and sent out as printed matter. In all we despatched the following:--1847 to missionaries in China; 385 to missionaries in Japan; 72 to missionaries in Corea; 20 to missionaries in Siam, etc.; making a total of 2324. The number of tracts sent out was about 5000.

The vast majority ignored our appeal. This we fully expected, for we know that many are much too full of work for the Lord to hear him speaking to them. Still many replies were received, varying much in tone and spirit. No less than four accused me of blasphemy. One Doctor of Divinity thought I had lost my head; one predicted that I had begun to drift toward infidelity. Some deplored my departure from the faith, while yet others, more kindly in intention, begged me to return to the simplicity of the gospel; but none of them knew the pearl of great price I had found.

One wrote to me thus:--"I am very grieved that you should have been so led away by the wicked one, and would solemnly urge you not to become one of Satan's agents, and a 'seducing spirit.'...We are living in perilous times, and I would warn you to beware of him who not only goeth about as a roaring lion, but also as an angel of light." Another wrote:--"It is just as Paul told Timothy, evil men will wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. I am so sorry to think that you, Dr. Randle, are one who is being deceived by these evil men." These are both personal and esteemed friends, from whom, as from many more, I am now counted alienated. May the Lord deal very graciously with them.

Others wrote thankfully, and showed their readiness for the harvest message. A well-educated Chinese woman wrote:--"I have been reading the tracts you so kindly left me, first with interest, then with delight, and I feel so much happier than I have been for a long time; the more I read the more I want to read and the more light I get, but there is still much I want to know. I would like to have MILLENNIAL DAWN and the pamphlet on Hell. If you tell me how to send the money I will be ever so much obliged."

In all we sold 90 DAWNS and 38 pamphlets on

Hell, Tabernacle Shadows, etc. One missionary, a young man who bought the four volumes, and has learned to appreciate and love the precious truths therein expounded, came out from Brethrenism, and is now standing alone in North China, bearing his testimony for the present truth. Four other missionaries are reading and studying the DAWNS with joy and profit, but have not yet come out of Babylon, which is to them no easy thing. I was also able to leave 25 volumes in Shanghai for further sale, and will be able to send more out if required, so that I trust the harvest work in the far East may continue to develop, until all shall have received at least some testimony to the light of present truth.

How true it is that the vast majority of the household of faith have no ear to hear the harvest message! As it was in Christ's first presence, so it is now. Immersed in their own work, many are preaching in his name, and doing wonderful works for him (Matt. 7:22), and yet they are as blind and deaf as the Pharisees of old, neither knowing nor doing the will of their Father in heaven. It is a strait gate indeed, and a narrow way, and verily few are finding the life they lead to. May we never cease to humbly and diligently inquire what is the Father's will concerning us, and abiding in Christ, that we may receive his spirit, may we be enabled not only to do that will, but also to see the loving-kindness that is in it!

HORACE A. RANDLE.

=====

R2633 : page 151

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM.

--MATT. 13:24-33.--MAY 27.--

"The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the Kingdom."

PARABLES of the Kingdom are really word-pictures of the Kingdom. No one of these parables represents the complete view of the subject, but merely one phase of it. The attentive Bible student will notice that the theme of the Gospel from first to last is the Kingdom. The message first given to Father Abraham was that his posterity would bless the world--that is to say, be a Kingdom exercising control over the world, and for its benefit and uplifting. This hope was before the Jewish mind for over sixteen hundred years, their expectation being that they would be exalted by God to that kingdom position and bless all the families of the earth, reconciling them to God. Our Lord's proclamation and that of his apostles, at

the first advent was, "The kingdom of God is at hand"--God is now ready to establish his Kingdom if the people are ready to receive it. "But his own received him not," and the Kingdom was taken from them as a nation, to be given to the holy nation, the peculiar people, the royal priesthood, whom the Lord would select,--choosing first from fleshly Israel so many as were ready, and the remainder from amongst the Gentiles during this Gospel age.

Naturally enough, the Jews did not grasp the situation, but were looking for our Lord to establish a fleshly Kingdom in their midst; and it was to counteract this erroneous thought that Jesus uttered these parables of the Kingdom--about nine of them--three being embraced in this lesson. The series began with the parable of the sower, examined in our last issue, which showed that there was but one true seed or message of the Kingdom, and that the fruitfulness of that seed would depend upon the character of heart into which it would fall. Next we have in order the parable of

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES.

Here the good seed or the message of the Kingdom which our Lord planted is represented as springing up in believers, and constituting them children or heirs of the Kingdom. It is very proper here to note that there is no other method at present of becoming

a child of God, an heir of the Kingdom, except through the acceptance of the Kingdom message, with all that it implies of consecration to the Lord, even unto death --"if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" in his Kingdom.--Rom. 8:17.

The object of these parables, then, was not to depict to our minds what the Kingdom would be like after it has been established in the world, but rather to picture before our minds something respecting the processes of development by which the Kingdom-class would be selected from amongst mankind and made ready for the Kingdom which is to be set up at the second coming of Christ in power and great glory,--when he shall establish that Millennial Kingdom for the very purpose of granting a judgment or trial to all the families of the earth--peradventure under the favorable opportunities of knowledge, etc., then granted unto them, many may choose life through obedience to God and attain it.

As in the preceding parable the Lord Jesus himself

was the sower of the good seed, so in this parable: It was Jesus who was sowing the seeds of truth, the promises, etc., which, springing up in the hearts of his disciples, transformed them to newness of life, making of them new creatures, and operating through them as his mouthpieces carried similar blessings wherever the message, the Gospel of the Kingdom, has gone.

"While men slept" the enemy of the sower of the good seed, viz., Satan, came and sowed tares amongst the wheat. The Lord himself not only made possible the Kingdom by redeeming mankind, but announced his willingness to receive some as joint heirs of it, and then departed for the far country, even heaven itself, not to return until the time for his Kingdom to be established in glory and power. (Mark 13:34.) His chosen apostles faithfully guarded the field so long as they lived, but when they fell asleep in death, as the Lord has foreseen and here predicted, the Adversary found good opportunity to bring in false doctrines, to sow error, and through the error to produce amongst the wheat a crop of tares--darnel. Tares have the peculiarity that while growing they very decidedly resemble wheat, so that it is almost impossible to tell them apart until a certain degree of maturity is reached; then the difference is clearly discernible to all of experience.

We see the fulfilment of this feature of the parable in Christendom to-day; the wheat was sown broadcast over a certain part of the field, the world of mankind, especially throughout Europe and America, and the tare-seed, the error and false doctrine, seems to have been sown still more liberally: and looking back we date that sowing as commencing as soon as the apostles were "fallen asleep." In consequence we find to-day Christians, true Christians, genuine Christians, begotten of the Word of God's promises, and fully in accord with it, and seeking to bring forth good fruit in their lives; and we also see an almost innumerable tare-class of imitation Christians, begotten not of the truth nor of the word of the Kingdom, utterly ignorant of it indeed; begotten of excitement, begotten of fear of hell, begotten of hopes of worldly advantage by joining a nominal church, begotten of pride and a desire to be in good society, begotten of social and financial ambition, etc.

It is often very difficult to discern clearly between these wheat and tare classes; nor has it been necessary so to do down through the eighteen centuries of this age, for the Master declared that they were to be permitted to grow together until the harvest-time, when the ripening of both under the clearer light of the harvest-time would manifest each class thoroughly and distinctly, and then a separation would take place under his supervision.

To our understanding we are now in the "harvest" or end of this age, and the light of present truth,

as it shines for the Lord's people walking in the path of the just, which shines more and more unto the perfect day, as well as the light of present truth as it is shining upon the world and its social and financial

R2634 : page 153

and scientific questions, is tending to ripen both the wheat and the tares. The tare class no longer seeks to hide itself, but rather seems to claim that it is the genuine article, the scientific class, evolutionists, higher-critics, and in general the worldly-wise. The wheat class is also becoming more and more discernible, as it ripens in the faith and hope and joy begotten of the Gospel of the Kingdom. The separating work mentioned in the parable is not only at hand, but in progress; a cleavage and separation between nominal Christians (tares) and true Christians (wheat), as nearly every one who is awake discerns: and this separation will be more and more discernible year by year as the harvest work progresses, until its close.

To have attempted to root out all the tares, and to have thus cleansed the wheatfield, at any time in the past, would have meant, as the parable shows, a complete shaking throughout the entire field, a commotion which would not have served the best interests of the wheat; hence the Lord has permitted for all these centuries that the two classes should live side by side and cooperate in church work, and unitedly profess to be his people, intending the separation to be manifest in the end of the age. And surely when the separation does occur it will cause a wonderful commotion in nominal Zion--"Babylon."

The reapers are first to gather the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them. They do not burn them at once, but proceed to gather the wheat into the garner; and not until after the wheat is garnered does the fire consume the tares. We are to remember that this is a parable, and that the fire is as much a symbol as the tares, the wheat and the garner; hence we are not to expect a literal burning of the masses of Christendom in a literal fire, after the little flock, the faithful wheat class, the children of the Kingdom, have been gathered into the barn, the garner, the heavenly condition.

The fire which will then come upon the wheatfield, from which the wheat has been gathered, and in which the tares are bundled, will be what the Scriptures elsewhere denominate "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation"--social trouble, financial trouble, religious trouble, accompanied by famine and pestilence, and the end of it will be the disruption of all law, order and religion and the prevalence of anarchy. In that trouble all the tares will be destroyed, in the sense that none of them thereafter will claim to be what they are not--none of them will

claim to be God's consecrated people. The various inducements by which they were brought to claim themselves to be Christ's followers, when they were not, will then be at an end. No longer will such a claim gain for them social or financial or other standing or advantage, and no longer will they make the false claim.

Explaining the parable privately to his disciples, our Lord showed them that the gathering of the wheat into the garner meant the completion of the work of this Gospel age--the completion of the Kingdom class that shall bless the world, and he says, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." Thus the Sun of Righteousness that is to arise in the Millennial morning, and which is to bless the whole world with the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God in Christ, is to be composed, not only of our Lord Jesus himself, the great light, but also of those chosen to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, his associates in the shining forth of the light of truth.

This was a totally different conception of the Kingdom from what had come to the minds of the Jewish people; and altho an explanation of the parable was given to the apostles, and they answered that they understood it, we may well doubt if they grasped the subject comprehensively, until after the day of Pentecost, when, as our Lord promised, the holy spirit brought them enlightenment of understanding.

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED.

The third parable-picture of the Kingdom in its present embryonic condition of development is intended to show that from a very small beginning the nominal church of this Gospel age would attain to quite considerable proportions. Its start is likened to the small mustard-seed, which attains to the largest size of its class of herbs. Yet this large development does not necessarily signify advantage or anything specially desirable, but on the contrary it becomes a disadvantage, in that the fowls of the air come and lodge in its branches, and defile it. The "fowls of the air" in the preceding parable of the sower represented Satan and his agents, and we are, we think, justified in making a similar application here, and interpreting this to mean that the Church planted by the Lord Jesus flourished rapidly and exceedingly, and that because of its attainments, strength, etc., Satan, through his agents, came and lodged in the various branches of the Church. They have been lodging in the branches of this Gospel Church for these many centuries, and are still to be found in her, a defiling element. They come in, not for the benefit of the mustard-seed tree

or shrub, but for their own convenience and benefit. It is in harmony with this that in the present time the Lord speaks of Babylon, nominal Christendom, as "the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."--Rev. 18:2.

This contamination of the original good planting,

R2635 : page 153

by the Adversary and his agents, is as prominent in this parable as in the parable of the tares, merely showing it from a different standpoint.

THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN.

Here again we have a word-picture of the Lord's Church during this Gospel age of her development and preparation for the Kingdom glory to follow.

In this parable we have brought to our attention the Lord's provision for the necessities of his people during this Gospel age--he did not leave them without a proper supply of food. The three measures of meal, equivalent to one ephah, constituted a good, liberal household supply. Like all of the Lord's provisions, it was good and pure, but as in the other parables the Adversary introduced impurity, falsity, etc., so in this one leaven is introduced into the meal. Leaven represents corruption throughout the Scriptures: in every other instance of its Scriptural use it is represented as an evil, an impurity, something that is defiling. For instance, the Israelites were to put away all leaven, all impurity, at the time of the Passover, that they might come the nearer to the Lord in holiness, etc. Again, our Lord Jesus refers to leaven as a corruption, bidding his disciples "Beware of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees"--beware of the false doctrines, the corrupt influence, proceeding from the scribes and Pharisees. Again, the Apostle Paul represents the leaven as an evil thing, saying, "Purge out the old leaven."--Exod. 13:7; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 5:7.

It would not seem reasonable that our Lord should use the word leaven here as Christian people generally suppose, in a good sense, as implying some grace of the holy spirit. On the contrary, we recognize consistency in all of his teachings, and we may be as sure that he would not use leaven as a symbol of righteousness as that he would not use leprosy as a symbol of holiness.

How then shall we apply this parable? We answer, that the grace of God given to his people in the beginning of this age, (1) the faith once delivered to the saints, (2) the hope set before us in the Gospel, (3) love, the bond of perfectness, summed up the three measures of the Lord's provision for his people,--in

partaking of which they were to become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. But gradually a woman arose, a false woman, represented in Revelation as a harlot, and as "that woman Jezebel." This Roman Catholic system obtained great power over the three measures of meal provided for God's household, and proceeded to mix therewith the leaven of her own impurity. The result was that all the family food, all the holy doctrines were contaminated with her false doctrines--nothing was left pure and clean, as handed to us originally by the apostles. The faith once delivered to the saints was distorted out of all semblance to its original simplicity; the hope set before us in the Gospel was changed to another hope entirely, unlike the original; the spirit of the Lord, Love, was perverted to a selfish love of creeds of men and human institutions. Alas! no wonder all Christendom is spiritually sick, because of this adulteration in its food supply.

From this standpoint we readily see the force and meaning of the Master's declaration, that at his return he would gird himself, and come forth and serve his people, and that he would send forth at the hands of his servants things both new and old from the storehouse of his grace, "meat in due season."

=====

R2635 : page 154

THE HARVEST PLENTEOUS--THE LABORERS FEW.

--MATT. 9:35-10:8.--JUNE 3.--

"It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."--Matt. 10:20.

IT IS A GREAT tribute to the spirit of liberty which prevailed amongst the Jews, that our Lord could and did preach the Gospel of the Kingdom from city to city in their synagogues without molestation. In contrast, we may feel sure that were he to attempt to teach in any of the churches of to-day, of any denomination, he would be refused the privilege--no matter how faithfully he should adhere to the Scriptural declarations, and the more explicit his teachings the more unsatisfactory would they be to those now in charge, who have a theory of their own respecting the Kingdom, which will not stand investigation, and whose weakness they would not wish to have exposed. And this loss of liberty amongst Christians, as compared with the Jews, in religious matters, is to their injury --making it that much the more difficult for them to hear the joyful sound of the present harvest message.

Notwithstanding all the healing of disease which our Lord accomplished, there were still multitudes of

sick who flocked from various directions to him, in hope of relief, and when we read that he was moved with compassion for the distressed sheep of Israel, it gives us a deeper appreciation of his kindness, his love, his mercy, and we do not feel that it was strange that he who had left the glory of the Father and the holy angels, and had humbled himself to man's estate, should now feel compassion for the weak and sinful, the degraded, depraved and pained. Rather, we say,

R2635 : page 155

It was just like him! Without such a spirit of compassion how would he have become our Redeemer, how would he have left the heavenly glory on our behalf! And when we think of him as being still the same it gives us fresh confidence, that notwithstanding our weaknesses and imperfections, and the imperfections and weaknesses of the whole world, "the groaning creation," this same Jesus has compassion, not only upon his people, but in a large sense in due time will have compassion upon all the families of the earth, and grant to all a full opportunity of recovery from the blights of sin, mental, moral and physical. Surely he only waits for the due time--the time appointed of the Father; then with his faithful, his Kingdom-class, as the Seed of Abraham, he shall indeed, in times of restitution, bless all the families of the earth with a full opportunity of reconciliation to God, and thus of the attainment of life eternal.

At the time of our lesson his work had not yet taken this broad sweep; nor has it yet, altho it has advanced beyond the confines of that time. Then his message of reconciliation and his help were extended only to the lost sheep of the household of natural Israel --not to the Samaritans nor to the Gentiles. Since then the blessing of reconciliation has been extended so that whosoever has an ear to hear, amongst the Gentiles or amongst the Samaritans, has the privilege of reconciliation during this Gospel age; but the great time of opening deaf ears and causing all to know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, will be in the Millennial age to follow this one.

Compassion, however, will be an element of the Lord's character so long as there are any who need help, and desire it; and this will be until the close of the Millennial age, when all willing to receive the help will have received it, and the only ones not blessed thereby will be those who shall have deliberately rejected his help. Then, and not until then, will his compassion cease to be exercised, for then there will be no need of compassion, that which is perfect having come through the grace of God in Christ.

Our Lord's compassion for the multitude suggested the sending forth of representatives, clothed with the power to heal the sick, etc., and in order to

bring his disciples into line with his thought he told them that the harvest was plenteous, but the laborers were few, and that they should offer prayer on this subject. The substance of their prayer would necessarily be,--Lord of the harvest, send forth me as a reaper in the harvest. Jesus himself was the Lord of the harvest; the whole matter was in his hands, and evidently the twelve apostles quickly caught his thought and spirit respecting the increase of the harvest work, and in consequence he sent them forth two and two; yet he restricted their going, even as he had restricted his own ministry, to fleshly Israel, because all of God's covenants and promises were still confined to that nation, and would not be open to others until a due time which the Father had fixed, and specified through the Prophet Daniel--viz., the end of Israel's seventy weeks of favor--three and a half years beyond our Lord's crucifixion.

"And he gave them power [authority] over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease and sickness." This power was holy spirit power, the same and yet different from that which they received later on at Pentecost from the Father. It was the same, in that the holy spirit or power of God is always the same power even tho it have differences of manifestation. It was holy, in that it was the spirit of our Lord Jesus, the holy spirit or power which was granted without measure unto him,--which he at this time communicated to these apostles, that they might, as his representatives, do a work in his name.

Indeed, we may surmise that as the curing of disease caused vitality to go out of our Lord Jesus, to effect the cure, and that thus every cure meant the robbing of himself of his own life-powers, his own

R2636 : page 155

vitality, so in this case we should understand that the power for the healing of the sick was Jesus' power, that the disciples did not use their own vitality, but merely his, which he communicated to them, and authorized them to use, saying, "Freely ye have received, freely give." They were giving what cost them nothing, but which was costing Jesus much daily and hourly. It is when we get this thought of our Lord's yielding up his life daily in doing good to others that we can best appreciate how his perfect life was so thoroughly used up in the short space of three and a half years.

The healing of the sick and the casting out of devils were but parts and incidents of their mission. In connection with it they were to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom--the good news that the Kingdom of God was nigh at hand; and the influence of the miracles should properly attract attention to the message,

and make the people ready, yea, anxious, for the Kingdom. But so far as the record shows, the people were anxious for the miracles, the healing, but very indifferent respecting the Kingdom. They would take the cures from Jesus and his disciples, but if they wanted information respecting how and when the Kingdom of God would come they would follow their blind guides as usual.

Nevertheless we may presume that the influence of this mission work throughout Israel was not entirely lost, and that after our Lord's crucifixion, and

R2636 : page 156

after the holy spirit had come upon the disciples at Pentecost, and they preached the Gospel of the Kingdom from a different standpoint, inviting all true Israelites to unite with Christ, and thus become joint-heirs of the Kingdom with him--then it was that many, no doubt, of these who had heard previously and witnessed the miracles, were that much better prepared to enter the embryotic Kingdom, the Church, through consecration of themselves to the Lord. And the conversion of several thousands within a few days after Pentecost corroborates this.

The harvest in the end of the Jewish age foreshadowed or typified the harvest of this Gospel age. And now, as then, Jesus is the Lord of the harvest, and his disciples, his messengers, are his agents in the gathering work. Now, as then, he seems to speak to these, saying that the harvest is great and that the laborers are few, and that if we have his spirit in the matter, and entreat him to send us forth in his service, he will be pleased to do so. And many are thus praying from day to day, and seeking to see what more their hands can find to do in the harvest work. And the Lord is graciously with such to guide their service and to bless the results to their own good as well as to the good of others. As all of the disciples then prayed this prayer, and got opportunity to engage in some part of the harvest work, so now all true disciples should be praying this prayer and should be expecting and utilizing opportunities for service.

The methods of the harvest work then and now may be slightly different, and yet they are considerably alike. This is not the fleshly Israel, and the blessings sent at the hands of the harvest reapers are not temporal blessings--not the healings of physical disease; but they are better than these--the opening of eyes of understanding, a far greater blessing than the opening of natural eyes; the removal of deafness as respects the Lord's great plan, a far more precious boon than the restoration of natural hearing, etc. Likewise, the offering of the Kingdom now is much more tangible and can be demonstrated much more clearly than was possible then, for it is nigh, even at

the doors, and even the world can see the shakings of the present institutions, preparatory to their removal, that those things of truth and grace which cannot be shaken may remain, may be established, under the Lord's reign of righteousness.

As the harvest laborers going forth now seek the ripe wheat of this Gospel age, each should remember the words addressed to the laborers in the Jewish harvest, "It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." Not that we are to expect to have miraculous powers of speech granted us, but that we are to be filled with the truth and its spirit; and then indeed it will be true that it will not be our own wisdom that we shall speak, nor our own plan that we shall declare, but the wisdom that cometh from above, and the plan of the Lord our God.

=====

R2636 : page 156

A WICKED WOMAN AND A WEAK MAN.

--MARK 6:14-29.--JUNE 10.--

GOLDEN TEXT:--"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be ye filled with the spirit."--Eph. 5:18.

HERODIAS, a young woman, closely related to the reigning family of the Herods, was ambitious to become a queen; her uncle Philip, being the eldest son of Herod the Great, was presumptively his heir, and accordingly she pressed her suit, and with such success that she was accepted as Philip's wife. But at the death of Herod the Great it was found that he had disinherited his eldest son, Philip, and that Herod Antipas was made successor to the kingdom.

It was necessary that Herod Antipas should go to Rome to be invested with regal authority, and while there he was the guest of his brother Philip and of Herodias, his wife and his niece, who of course was chagrined that she had failed of her ambition. However, ambitions know no bounds, especially selfish ones, and she seems at once to have set herself to captivate her younger uncle Antipas. Her cunning seems to have been without scruple of any kind, and remarkably successful. She so wrought upon Herod Antipas that he dismissed his wife, the daughter of the king of Arabia, and then Herodias, with her own child, a girl of probably fourteen, left her husband Philip, to become the wife of Herod Antipas, and thus to attain the position of queen, which she had coveted.

The shortcomings and failures of others should become to us valuable lessons. In the case of Herodias before us we see illustrated the power of ambition, and how important it is that our ambitions be noble

and true and pure. Nearly all there is of good accomplished in the world is somehow or other connected with good ambitions, and likewise nearly all the evil in the world is somehow or other associated with wrong ambitions. How important that we should learn to guard our ambitions, our desires, our hopes, our aims: we cannot accomplish anything without hopes and aims and ambitions; hence the necessity for securing good ones. And here let us note the fact that the majority of mankind have little or no ambition, and

R2636 : page 157

therefore are passing through life in a kind of maze, accomplishing comparatively little for themselves or others. This is a wrong condition; every man, woman and child should have a noble ambition, and should labor constantly for the attainment of that ambition.

Others of the world have such ambitions as had Herodias: they are ambitious for wealth, or for social position and display, or for title and honor amongst men. These are all selfish ambitions, yet they are the powers that are moving politics and business and society every day--and we are sorry to say these are the ambitions which are moving many in the pulpits and many in various religious works. These are all wrong ambitions, and tho they may not all result as evilly as did that of Herodias they are all selfish, and all tend at least in the same general direction toward evil, and many are seduced by their selfish ambitions into doing those things which their consciences do not approve, and many such become seducers of others into evil deeds and reprehensible schemes.

The Christian has before him the only proper, legitimate and worthy ambition possible at the present time; nor does the average or nominal Christian have these correct ambitions, but rather only such Christians as are taught of God, such as hear and heed the Word of the Lord. Before these are set the most noble, lofty ambitions; they are invited into the society, friendship and fellowship of the King of kings and Lord of lords. They are invited to become his companions, his brethren, co-workers together with him in the great work he is now accomplishing, and also to be joint-heirs with him in the great work of the Millennial Kingdom which he is shortly to inaugurate. Could there be a higher ambition than this set before mortal man? Surely not. Moreover, it is an ambition which tends to develop all the higher qualities of mind and character, for the terms and conditions of this fellowship are based upon purity of heart, devotion to the Lord, etc., so that he that hath these ambitions and hopes in him purifieth himself even as he is pure with whom he has become associated. Let us have these true ambitions before us, that they may crowd out and trample down the inferior ambitions of earth

and sensuality, that lead to sin, groveling and devilishness.

Herodias, having gained her point thus far, and finding herself in the coveted position of queen, undoubtedly felt greatly elated, flushed with her success; but in the midst of this elation came the news respecting

R2637 : page 157

John the Baptist, and how he had had an interview with Herod the king, and in the presence of courtiers and others had declared that it was not lawful for him to have Herodias for his wife. This was a shock to Herodias. Who would have thought that any man would have been bold enough to have spoken to the king on such a subject; and who would have thought that the king would have heard him patiently, and even have seemed interested in him, and have considered him a prophet of the Lord God?

What wonder Herodias was angry with John the Baptist, and sought to wreck upon him her vengeance! Had she plotted and planned for years to reach her present position, and was she to be thwarted now, and to be cast out at the word of such a man as this? Moreover, if she were now cast out, it would mean a worse condition than ever, for of course she could not with decency go back to her husband Philip, and expect to be kindly received of him. Hence, if Herod should give ear to John the Baptist, and should permit his message to influence him, it might mean that Herodias would become an outcast. Can we wonder, then, that the evil ambition which had thus far ruled the woman's heart should now move her against the great prophet? We could only say that it would be the legitimate fruitage of such evil ambitions as she had for years been cultivating at the expense of every principle. It had not hesitated thus far at anything, and why should it hesitate even at murder, now in its greatest extremity?

So it is with all evil, selfish ambition--the tendency is always downward, going from evil to evil, from sin to sin, from crime to crime. On the contrary, the ambitions which are inspired of the Lord tend always upward and upward, higher and higher--whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are in harmony with God--this is the tendency and impulse of the ambition which God inspires, the wisdom which cometh down from above, which is first pure, then peaceable and easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits.

Herodias had sufficient influence over her husband to secure the arrest and imprisonment of John: but apparently she was chagrined that she could not accomplish her desires to the full in securing his death. This was not so much because Herod had a mind of

his own, but rather, as the narrative declares, because of his fear. He knew John to be a righteous man and holy, and, as the Revised Version expresses it, "kept him safe"--possibly fearing that if John were set at liberty Herodias would find agents for his destruction. Apparently John was granted unusual liberties in prison, for his disciples had opportunity to come to him and to bear messages to and from him; and the intimation is that Herod was perplexed respecting how he should deal with him, and occasionally sent for him and heard him with interest.

Herodias concluded that this was a dangerous

R2637 : page 158

condition of things, and again her tact and shrewdness came to her assistance. Herod's birthday was approaching, and knowing that it was generally celebrated she proposed to make a special effort on that occasion to secure her ends. These birthday feasts were occasions of carousal; the king would be surrounded by the notable men of his realm; all would be considerably under the influence of wine, and then would be Herodias' opportunity for securing her wishes. She was crafty, however, and realized that John had an influence upon the king that to some extent at least off-set her own. She realized then that the king knew well her heart, and that he would hesitate to make a broad and liberal offer to her, and so she prepared her young daughter, educated in Rome, beautiful, attractive, that she should take the place before the king of the ordinary dancing girls who usually served on such occasions of revelry.

This was supposedly a rare treat, a high honor to the king, that his niece, a young lady of refinement, should take the position ordinarily occupied by one of a low class. The ruse was successful; the king and the court were charmed with the girl's beauty, and Herod's mind, inflamed with the wine, was generous and unselfish to the extreme. It was customary to remunerate the dancing girls liberally on such occasions, in proportion to the dignity of the entertainer and now how liberally should he treat this one, who had so bewitchingly pleased himself and the company, and who was his own niece and step-daughter? He would ask her what she would like to have, and in her natural hesitancy he would press the matter upon her, to mention whatever it might be, even to the half of his kingdom; and then boastfully he would make oath to his liberality. The girl, no doubt, was instructed of her mother what to expect, and yet the crafty woman had kept the design wholly within her own grasp. Her daughter should not know in advance, lest she should make some error; she should merely first have the king's word that she would have her desire; then she was to come to her mother and

receive instructions. Childlike, she seems not to have had great ambitions and wishes of her own, and hence she at once adopted her mother's wish, and asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

How horrible it seems, that anyone should have such a desire, such a murderous condition of heart! How strange it seems that a refined, educated woman should have such sentiments as would prompt such a request! Yet it was but the natural operation of the evil in the fallen heart. As the Apostle James says, the beginning of temptation is to be drawn away of desire, of ambition--enticed thereby. Then, when desire (ambition) has conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.-- James 1:14,15.

Even the weak and despicable Herod was shocked by the request. He had been trapped, and he saw it; he realized at once that this was a scheme on the part of his wife, and that now, as on former occasions, she had proven more than a match for him. What would he do? Would he resent such infamous conduct, and denounce his wife and her daughter as murderers, plotters against innocent blood of a righteous man? Would he take his stand for justice and for truth, and resolve that now, seeing the depth of wickedness into which he had been ensnared, he would strive to turn about in his course, and follow the advice of this prophet of the Lord, and reform?

No; he had not sufficient character for that; and from his wrong standpoint of view duty appeared to lie on the other side: First, had he not given his word, and should not the word of a king, given on his birthday, and at a feast, and in the presence of his chief generals and supporters, be inviolable? Moreover, in his maudlin condition he had riveted the matter with an oath, and now from his wrong standpoint pride asserted itself, and would not permit him to take the right course. Here again we see in an exaggerated form a principle which applies daily to worldly people in all of their affairs. They have a wrong standpoint before their minds. It is a standard of pride and self-esteem and love of approbation of others, and not a love for righteousness, for truth, and of deference for the Lord; and hence many have found themselves like Herod, led step by step, by what seems to them to be fate, and as they would say, beyond their control; but such matters are beyond the control of men because they are not under the proper control, because they are not the Lord's people; because they have not given their hearts to him. Therefore the affairs of life, instead of working for good to them and bringing them valuable lessons, helpful and elevating, are bringing them experiences which lead downward continually. The lesson here for the Lord's people is to make a proper start, to recognize the Lord, his will, his word, as the standard of justice and of truth, and

to walk accordingly. A further lesson is, that wherever we may be, wherever the truth may find us, in a downward course, the only proper method is to at once recognize the voice of the Lord, the voice of right, as paramount, and to obey that voice, regardless of how matters may seem or appear to fallen fellow men.

That the king was sorry is indeed an indication that his heart was not utterly corrupt, but that he should yield to what he knew to be wrong, through pride, is an evidence of utter lack of character. History shows that a certain amount of retribution came

R2637 : page 159

upon these guilty people forthwith: the sending back of his first wife led to a war between Herod and his father-in-law, the king of Arabia, in which Herod's forces were worsted seriously. Later on Herodias prompted Herod to apply to Rome for an enlargement of his dignity and power, but his application was rejected, and instead he was dethroned, lost all his title, power and influence, and the only redeeming quality noted in the case of Herodias is that she shared Herod's loss and banishment. Poor woman! Perhaps finally she learned that earthly ambitions are much like the apples of Sodom; perhaps she learned the folly of the course she pursued, that it brought no true joy, no true blessing, but only excitement and one disappointment after another. Perhaps, too, King Herod learned some lessons. We read that he heard of Jesus and his

R2638 : page 159

wonderful works, and that superstitiously he concluded that this must be John risen from the dead. Altho not a Jew, but of the family of Esau, he nevertheless had some knowledge of God and of the hopes set before the Israelites, and possibly his evil experiences brought him some valuable lessons.

So with many of the world in the present time: their experiences are bad, and yet they impress lessons upon themselves, and upon others, which ultimately may be of service, of value. As we look at their mistakes let us learn to profit by avoiding them in our lives. Let us remember, too, that all ambitions and temptations are not on the large and terrible scale of this picture before us, yet that the same principles are involved. Let us learn to recognize principles, whether operating in little things or in great ones, and that he who is faithful to right principle in small things will be faithful in greater trials. Let us first of all learn that the proper course for us is to consecrate ourselves to the Lord, and then seek to have the lawful and laudable ambitions which he will inculcate through the Word.

FAITHFUL CO-LABORERS HEARD FROM.

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY,

DEAR BRETHREN:--I have read carefully Bro. Russell's five volumes of DAWN, most of it the second time, and parts of it three and four times. I am satisfied Bro. Russell is correct on the general plan and application of God's Word, and the study of the Bible under his instruction is made easy and fascinating. It has been a great blessing to me and I can go about my daily business now with a prayer of thanksgiving in my heart continually, and can hardly wait to get through the cares of the day, so I can read God's Word and find out more about it.

I had been a member of the M.E. Church here for about fifteen years, ten of which I was superintendent of Sunday schools, trustee and steward. I never was satisfied, tho I tried to do my duty as a member. I had no "plan of the ages" in my head, and all was confusion. The church was full of envy, deceit, hypocrisy, lies, malice, etc. I plead for months with the members for "better living," but did no good, so two years ago last August I severed my connection with same, and was inclined to drift into unbelief, till I got hold of your works about six months ago; and thank God! I have more confidence now in God's Word than I ever had before, and can see the beauty, justice, wisdom and love of God as it is therein manifested to poor human souls.

I have five full sets of MILLENNIAL DAWN (five volumes each) now in circulation in this town where we think the parties will investigate and be benefited. I have lived in this place 24 years and when I was a member of the M.E. Church and paying them from \$50 to \$75 per year was considered by them at least a good man; but now the preachers devote a good deal of their time to denouncing me and "the devil's work of DAWN" as they term it. They denounce awhile, and then they pray for me awhile. Well, that is something they did not formerly bother about much, I think. I get their prayers anyhow, whether it does me any good or not.

We now have about twelve believers in this neighborhood and others reading and thinking. I especially want to mention one brother, who has been reading your works for 20 years. I believe he is the best Christian, and most devoted, practical liver in Christ I ever saw, tho church members say he is crazy. I wish myself as crazy as I know him to be. [So our Lord and the Apostles were said to be "beside themselves." --EDITOR.]

Will you have a meeting this summer like the

one you held last summer in St. Louis? If so let me know, as I want to attend if possible.

Yours in Christ, N. B. JINNETT,--Illinois.

[We expect to have a "Believers' Convention" in Chicago the latter part of August.--EDITOR.]

MR. C. T. RUSSELL,

DEAR SIR:--I take the opportunity to write to you, in manifestation of my sincere and heartfelt approval of your magnificent works, now in my hand. Your volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN I must hold and confess to be a veritable Bible Key, justly deserving the appellation they bear--Helps for Bible Students. I have in my possession volumes one to five, in addition to What Say the Scriptures About Hell? and Spiritism. Sir, before offering any opinion or remarks, permit me to say, first, that with regard to your little work on What Say the Scriptures About Hell? I do a little Greek reading. I know nothing of Hebrew, but I must confess that it puzzled me beyond measure to find out where our early interpreters of the Scriptures found the substance or foundation of that horrible doctrine. And gaining much, very much knowledge on the subject by reading that little work, I have to ask the question, "What was their motive for establishing this hell torment doctrine?" The only answer I can find is that it was from some selfish end, to frighten men into Christianity, a plan the Almighty never intended, having made man a free agent to choose for himself. But these "devil doctrines" will soon

R2638 : page 160

have to give way to the light of present day truth. My profession being that of Christian work--a catechist and schoolmaster--in the latter position I sometimes find it difficult indeed, after choosing a text, to know where to begin or where to end; not because words fail me, but from the fact that the doctrines I have been brought up in were so twisted and distorted that I did not know where was solid ground. I am not ashamed to confess that many passages appeared so difficult that I preferred to leave them to themselves. But thanks to your invaluable helps, many such confounding passages are now as clear to me as daylight. Sir, I hold that Almighty God himself has raised you up to be the purveyor of heavenly food for his famishing children; so that I need not say anything more than wishing you a fair share of his divine blessing. I am still reading and studying my volumes. At first there were some things that seemed to conflict with my views and opinions, and where disagreement crept in, but that, I hold, was because I did not grasp the full purport of the subject, for no sooner than grasped, disagreement disappeared, leaving the approval to remain. I never quickly agree to a special

subject or point, before I thoroughly sift and strain and pry into it to find its foundation and harmony. I came to this country in November, 1898, under the appointment of the Bishop of Jamaica. Before I left my island I once had the opportunity of seeing the first volume of DAWN, which a friend possessed, but partly destroyed--back and inside leaves were gone. I determined to find out the authorship, and was gratified in having my wish supplied. Mr. A. M. Brownfield is the man from whom I obtained all. He is my constant visitor since. There is also another brother who has written me from Colon, after learning I was a reader of DAWN, Bro. Isaiah Richards. Sir, I am your disciple, I can assure you; and I hope one day to find myself where you are. This, I hope, is but the first of the many letters I expect to write. Yours in Christ, H. E. WYNTER,--Isthmus of Panama.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Many thanks for the kindly words and token of your letter of Dec. 25th. The gracefulness of your action manifests an imitation of him who was the embodiment of grace. (Psalm 45:2.) Oh, to get nearer to him in thought, word and deed! The Christ-like spirit is so very rare, but the genuine article so very precious. I trust you will always bear in mind how very much we treasure up your many labors of love, and how our unceasing desire and prayer is, that Jehovah's richest blessing may constantly rest upon you and the great work committed to your care.

In our work here we are striving to do what we can. We are not realizing all we desire, for our hearts are so human, that, battle as one will, the prevailing spirit of indifference brings at times a keen sense of disappointment. The truth is so glorious that one is saddened at the reception it meets from the vast majority. But then, of course, God's "due time" is the grand refuge and sweetener; the "lamps" of the "ten virgins" are not intended to take the place of the sun, but to light their individual pathway. Each must have his own lamp and oil in it. The great bulwark of error is leaning upon others: true faith must be individual, endurance likewise. A mob of sheep rushing after a leader of their own nature is the general position; the Good Shepherd leads his sheep and calls them each by name. The body of Christ is to be one, as a collective number (John 14:21-23), but this oneness is contributed to by each individual.

How the truth isolates! It demands a strong individuality in each. Surely the life of Christ shows this most clearly. He was a reflex of the Father; he was the Father's great and perfect representative. "I seek not mine own will, but his that sent me." And yet what a wondrous personality! His was not

a passive service, he was not a machine (holy spirit does not destroy personality) but an active, willing, responsive being, God's "vessel unto honor." Christ's moral nature responded to the touch of God like a bud to the rays of the sun or a grand organ to the fingers of a musician, but he was alone, in the most complete sense, so far as this world was concerned. His motives, ideals and practices were so different. "He dwelt amongst us." Fellowship with God was his only source of companionship, "God was with him." Why? "Because I do always those things which please him." Surely this is our pattern: individual fellowship and service is the one means for individual strength. "Study to show thyself approved unto God." The bride of the Lamb when gathered into one is plural, but its building up is in the singular.

What a grand prospect the "truth" presents as the goal of this individual discipline! A perfect nature, "satisfied when I awake in thy likeness;" the goal of human creeds is paltry, absurd,--a future state of locality merely--going to heaven, missing "hell!"

There is beautiful scenery on earth, but it does not give rest or peace or happiness. Our restless nature is like a troubled sea, nothing outside can calm it; the trouble is in man; that is where it started, and that is where the reform must be made. The chief value of heaven is because of God's presence and nature, "it is his throne;" so with the earth: far greater planets roll in space, but Christ places this planet as next in importance to God's throne, not because of its intrinsic value, but because of God's promises, purpose and presence. "The earth is my footstool," hence Jesus says, "Swear not by it." "Forever with the Lord," in his nature, throne and work is the perfect goal.

But surely this perfect goal embraces even more; it is not merely for the individual believer and overcomer. "What shall they do, that are baptized for the dead?" etc. The joy set before Christ embraced more than his own perfect bliss. His glorified body is not only perfect, but it is a conquering one, "according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself." Preeminently this feature separates the "truth" from all human conceptions. Something to do, something to realize, "to show forth the praises of him who hath called us," etc. "The glory that shall be revealed in us." Service is the grandest law of God's universe. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." His angels are ministering spirits; perfect happiness and rest will only be realized by a perfect nature performing perfect service. May it be ours more and more to enter now into the true glory of service to see its lofty standard, its eternal basis, and by and by to see his face and enter into his joy.

Your brother in the one blessed hope,

ALFRED PEARSON,--New South Wales.
