

page 65

SEMI-MONTHLY.
VOL. XXVII. MARCH 1, 1906 No. 5

CONTENTS.

Views from the Watch Tower.....	67
Christian Tenets the Jews May Adopt.....	67
Spontaneous Generation of Life.....	68
Foreign Missions and the Second Coming of Christ.....	69
Berean Bible Study for March.....	70
Blessedness Superior to Happiness.....	70
Mourners Blessed and Comforted.....	71
Blessed are the Meek.....	72
Blessed are the Pure in Heart.....	73
Blessed the Persecuted.....	74
The Salt of the Earth.....	75
"Ho, Prodigal Return!" (Poem).....	76
Lessons on Self-Control.....	76
An Eye for an Eye.....	77

page 66

LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.
BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND REMITTANCES

--ADDRESS TO--

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

--OR TO--

BRITISH BRANCH--24 EVERS HOLT ST., LONDON, N.W.
GERMAN BRANCH--MIRKER STR., 45, ELBERFELD.
AUSTRALASIAN BRANCH--32 JOHNSTON ST., FITZROY, MELBOURNE.

PRICE, \$1.00 (4S.) A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, BANK DRAFT, POSTAL ORDER, OR REGISTERED.
FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY.

TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR AS FOLLOWS:--

All Bible Students who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity or adversity, are unable to pay for this Journal, will be supplied FREE if they send a Postal Card each June stating their case and requesting its continuance. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list continually and in touch with the Studies, etc.

=====

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER AT ALLEGHENY, PA., POST OFFICE.

=====

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED IN THE
FRENCH, GERMAN, SWEDISH, DANISH AND ITALIAN LANGUAGES.
SAMPLE COPIES FREE.

=====
"IN DUE TIME."--GONE

Our stock of this year's motto cards is exhausted; but we have placed another order and hope to announce plenty more and to fill all back orders in a few months.

VOLUNTEER AMMUNITION.

Organize your Volunteers for 1906 at once, as we hope to be filling orders by April.

WATCH TOWER BINDERS.

These are substantially made of stiff cloth boards, and can hold two years' issues of the WATCH TOWER. They prevent soiling and loss. Price, postpaid, 50c.

CHARTS OF THE TABERNACLE.

We have arranged to supply beautiful Charts of the Tabernacle on cloth, carriage prepaid, for two dollars each. Very choice, and very cheap for the quality.

WE AGAIN HAVE THE EATON-RUSSELL DEBATES IN
GOOD SUPPLY

The six debates published by "Gazette" as one number for one cent each postpaid, any quantity.

=====
R3731 : page 67

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

CHRISTIAN TENETS THE JEWS MAY ADOPT.

TO find a celebrated and influential Jew advising his race to "follow the letter of the Law in the spirit of the Gospel" is a decidedly interesting feature of the religious situation. Mr. Claude G.

Montefiore, president of the Anglo-Jewish Association, founder of The Jewish Quarterly Review and a man of light and leading in British Jewry, gives his fellows this counsel in the current number of The Hibbert Journal (London). Before giving this advice, he takes occasion to remark to the Christian readers of his article that some of the doctrines which they imagine to be distinctively Christian were, and are, Jewish. The conception of the fatherhood of God and of His loving-kindness, for example, has been paraded as Christian, "whereas to the rabbinic, medieval, and modern Jew it was, and is, the ABC of his religion." Similarly, the doctrines "that reconciliation with one's neighbor must precede reconciliation with God, or that the best alms are those given in secret, or that impure thoughts are evil as well as impure deeds, or that there is peculiar joy in heaven over the repentant--these doctrines and several others are not only rabbinic commonplaces, but familiar Jewish maxims."

The common Jewish objections to Christianity are that some of its teaching is "unpractical and overstrained," that the ideal is so high as to be "incapable of realization," that "if some maxims were literally obeyed, there would be a subversion of law and order, and universal confusion," that "the tendency of the teaching is to make a man take a too selfish interest in the saving of his own soul," and that it "points toward an ascetic morality."

In one divergence of doctrine between the rabbinic religion and that of the synoptic Gospels, however, Mr. Montefiore seems to incline toward the latter. He says:

"The rabbinic religion followed the prevailing doctrine of the Old Testament in holding that, on the whole, the right principle of human conduct, and the great principle of divine conduct, was that of proportionate requital, or tit for tat. I do not mean to say that other principles, such as that of the divine forgiveness, did not frequently cross the principle of tit for tat, but still it seems true to say that tit for tat occupies a very large place in Jewish ethics and religion, a larger place than the facts of life or our highest ethical and religious conceptions can fully justify and approve. Now the teaching of the synoptic Gospels seems to traverse that doctrine in many different ways. As between man and man we have, for instance, the teaching, 'If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye?' and the reception of the prodigal son, and as between God and man the teaching seems more emphatic still. Not only that the sun rises on the evil as well as the good, but also, in the parable of the vineyard, I will give unto this last even as unto thee.'....

"Perhaps one reason, tho not the deepest, why the doctrine of tit for tat is less thought of in the Gospels, is their rather pronounced antagonism to earthly good fortune, their strong sympathy with, or even partiality

for, the weak, the miserable, and the poor. The only treasures of any value are the treasures to be attained in heaven. The treasures of earth are transitory from a double reason--the individual dies, and the old order is rapidly nearing its close. The same thoughts meet us not infrequently in the rabbinic literature, but we note in the Gospels a kind of passionate glorification of renunciation and adversity as marks of true discipleship, and as the one sure passport to heaven. This note goes beyond--how far rightly is another question--the rabbinic 'chastisements of love.' The soul is all. 'Adversity is the blessing of the New Testament.' With incomparable eloquence and power the Gospels disclose to us one aspect of the ultimate truth, one facet of reality, to which we can never again be blind, even tho we realize that it is by no means the complete reality, by no means the only truth through which we must work and live, the truth, I mean, which Professor Bradley, with such splendid insight, has lately shown us to be exhibited by King Lear, that 'the judgment of this world is a lie; [that] its goods which we covet corrupt us; [that] its ills, which wreck our bodies, set our souls free'; 'the conviction that our whole attitude in asking or expecting that goodness should be prosperous is wrong; that, if only we could see things as they are

R3731 : page 68

we should see that the outward is nothing, and the inward is all."

And of the Christian doctrine of self-renunciation to save others he writes:

"The renunciation, the self-denial, and that daily carrying of the cross, whereby Luke, as Wellhausen notes, changes mere martyrdom into a general way of life, are not in the Gospels urged and intended solely to save one's own soul, but also to save others. The endurance, the self-sacrifice, are not to be merely passive, but active. They are to be helpful and redemptive; through loving service and sympathy to awaken in the sinner the dormant capacity of righteousness and love.

"Lowly, active service for the benefit of the humblest is an essential feature of the synoptic religion.

'He who would be great among you, let him be your servant.' 'It is not the will of my Father that one of these little ones should perish.' The teaching of the synoptics in this matter seems to cluster round those three great sayings: 'The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister;' 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners;' 'The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.'

"And here, once more, we seem to be cognizant of fresh and original teaching, which has produced fruit to be ever reckoned among the distinctive glories of Christianity. It has two aspects: first, the yearning

and eager activity to save and to redeem; secondly, the special attitude of the Master toward sinners and toward sin. The rabbis and the rabbinic religion are keen on repentance, which in their eyes is second only to the law; but we do not, I think, find the same passionate eagerness to cause repentance, to save the lost, to redeem the sinner. The refusal to allow that any human soul is not capable of emancipation from the bondage of sin, the labor of pity and love among the outcast and the fallen, go back to the synoptic Gospels and their Hero. They were hardly known before his time. And the redemptive method which he inaugurated was new likewise. It was the method of pity and love. There is no paltering with sin; it is not made less odious; but instead of mere threats and condemnations, the chance is given for hope, admiration, and love to work their wonders within the sinner's soul. The sinner is afforded the opportunity for doing good instead of evil, and his kindly services are encouraged and praised. Jesus seems to have had a special insight into the nature of certain kinds of sin, and into the redeemable capacity of certain kinds of sinners. He perceived that there was a certain untainted humility of soul which some sins in some sinners had not yet destroyed, just as he also believed and realized that there was a certain cold, formal, negative virtue which was practically equivalent to sin, and far less capable of reformation. Overzealous scrupulosity, and the pride which, dwelling with smug satisfaction upon its own excellence, draws away the skirt from any contact with impurity, were specially repugnant to him. Whether with this sin and with its sinners he showed adequate patience may perhaps be doubted, but it does seem to me that his denunciation of formalism and pride, his contrasted pictures of the lowly publican and the scrupulous pharisee, were new and permanent contributions to morality and religion. As the Jewish reader meets them in the synoptic Gospels, he recognizes this new contribution; and if he is adequately open-minded, he does it homage and is grateful."

SPONTANEOUS GENERATION OF LIFE.

We see much in the public prints respecting the efforts of chemists and biologists to produce life, and several "professors" have announced their success in so doing. What are the facts?

For centuries scientific minds--skeptical respecting the teachings of the Bible that God is the author of life, the Creator of all things--have been examining nature to see how life has its start. At first it seemed that new bugs, worms and insects were from time to time created independently. For instance, many have noticed that an old, water-soaked wooden pail would

be lifted and an enormous roach found beneath it--too large to have crawled under, and perhaps of a kind not previously seen in that quarter.

Further research demonstrated that there are in the earth, the air and the water, microbes far too small to be seen by the naked eye, which, under favorable conditions, would produce larger living creatures of one kind or another, according to the environments and conditions.

Then came the suggestion that all the larger forms of being were mere evolutions from lower to higher. With this thought the learned of this world have been wrestling for the past fifty years, shaking the foundations of faith in the Bible for millions. For if the Bible be true this theory is false as respects man's origin. Instead of further evolution being our salvation the Bible points us to our fall, to the redemption accomplished for the world by the Son of God, and to the coming deliverance of the groaning creation from sin and its death penalty. Only those who trust the Bible

R3732 : page 68

record are safe from the blighting influence of this evolution error.

STILL ON THE WRONG PATH

Still pursuing the wrong trail, our wise men of to-day conclude that although they cannot gainsay that our entire race sprang from one pair, and although the highest type of monkey still leaves an impossible chasm between it and mankind, even in his most depraved condition, nevertheless they may yet find the "missing link" by which the first human pair, supposedly very inferior and degraded, could have been produced. Alas! how much more men will labor to establish an error than to corroborate a truth.

Without waiting to find the "missing link," others of the "learned," who know not God, have started at the other end of the line, to prove that God had nothing to do with creation. Rather their claim is that Nature is God. And although they know her not except in his works, they ascribe all power and skill to Nature. The endeavor now is to prove that Nature is God--that the very lowest form of life, protoplasm, is Nature's oldest child, from which sprang, gradually, by evolution, every creature, including man, who they claim is progressing rapidly without a fall, without a Redeemer, and without need of any heavenly aid, to perfection.

DR. LITTLEFIELD'S FINDINGS (?)

Dr. C. Littlefield now steps before the world announcing that he by experiments has actually produced

living organisms where there was no life of any kind previously. He asserts that he was very careful in these experiments and surely excluded every lurking microbe. If true, if it can be corroborated by others, it will be assumed as proof that there is no Creator, no God, except Nature. Ah! says one of old, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

If it be true that a low form of life can be produced chemically, it proves nothing. What is Nature but the creature of our all-wise God? The divine power placed all the conditions of Nature and fixed her limitations as we behold in the various animal species. The Bible record is that God commanded the sea first to bring forth, and produced the conditions necessary to its teeming life. But the same Bible with explicitness declares the special creation of mankind in the Creator's likeness, and not in the image of a baboon.

THE CLAIM IS DISPUTED

Fortunately for the truth, when one "professor" seeks to shine another seems ambitious to shine by extinguishing him. So here we have from the Scientific American Professor C. E. Tingley's repudiation of Professor Littlefield's claims, with logical reasons for supposing that the experiments were not reliable. We quote:

"It is a far cry from a simple protoplasmic cell to that of a highly organized insect such as that just described, in fact almost as far as it is from lifeless crystals to living matter. Oppositely, the higher critics will have none of it, basing their conclusions on practically the same grounds that Professor Tyndall took in relation to Dr. C. Henry Bastian's experiments nearly thirty-five years ago. This scientist, it would seem, was eminently qualified to investigate the origin of life, for he was recognized as an authority on biology and the pathology of the nervous system, and he was a strong advocate of the doctrine of spontaneous generation of life. In one of his many papers he pointed out the results he had obtained in creating life artificially, and he declared that 'observation and experiment unmistakably testified that living matter is constantly being formed de novo and in accordance with the same laws and tendencies which determine all the more simple chemical combinations.' Professor Tyndall took up the matter and carefully tested Dr. Bastian's experiments, but took precautions, which the latter had neglected, to prevent the ingress of life during the processes of sealing the vessels, and though he varied the experiment in many ways no germs of life manifested themselves, so that Tyndall felt impelled to thus testify: 'I affirm that no shred of trustworthy

evidence exists to prove that life in our day has ever appeared independent of antecedent life.'

"The moral of Tyndall's statement is obvious; the value of Dr. Littlefield's or any one else's experiments in the artificial generation of life lies absolutely and solely on excluding every trace of pre-existing life and thus preventing contamination which must otherwise surely follow during the progress of the tests. Carelessness in this respect has led biologists, even those who believe in the hypothesis of abiogenesis, to cry down every attempt made looking toward the artificial production of life. At various times Spencer, Huxley, Darwin, and Pasteur were firmly convinced that they had found the secret of life, but repeated experiments wherein antecedent life was more rigorously excluded than before proved their efforts futile.

"Evidently error of a similar nature has crept into the tests of Dr. Littlefield, and this is not said without due consideration, for the present writer has performed the experiment as above written, not one but many times, and in every instance the result was not successful beyond the mere crystallization of the chlorides.

"It is true that more recent reports state that the development took place under sealed glasses thoroughly sterilized before beginning and sealed from the air when placed on the shelf, but it is obvious that there was every chance for pre-existing life to slip in, and so what would otherwise have been regarded as a wonderful achievement in science has not been taken very seriously by men skilled in either chemistry or biology."

=====

R3732 : page 69

FOREIGN MISSIONS AND THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

THE following is a digest of an address given upon Foreign Missions at the recent session of the Friendship Association, by R. E. Neighbour, pastor First Baptist Church, Americus, Ga."

"Brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath rehearsed unto me how first God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophet; as it is written: After these things I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, sayeth the Lord, who maketh these things known of old."

From these four verses, quoted from Acts 15:13-18, R.V., we learn:

First. God will at first visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

Second. After these things, Christ will return.

Third. The tabernacle of David will then be rebuilt.

Fourth. The residue of men, and all the Gentiles, will seek after the Lord.

Here we find God, the holy Spirit, unfolding the plan of this age. The work of the Church, then, is what?

To take out of the Gentiles, or nations, a people for his name. It is impossible to read into these words that we are to "take the world for Christ." This is an "elect" age. The Church, God's "ecclesia," are a people "called out" from among the nations.

The Church is a minority, and will remain so during its whole existence. The work of the Church can never be marked "a failure," as long as it is doing the work that God ordained. Because the Church does not "convert the world," it cannot, therefore, be deducted that the Church is making the world worse.

But what is the great inspiration of Foreign Missions? Surely, without a doubt, it is the Second Coming of Christ in pre-Millennial glory. And why? Because, as soon as the Church arouses herself and, empowered by the Spirit, gathers

R3732 : page 70

out of the Gentiles the certain number of God's elect, then he will come and establish himself on David's throne, after which the residue of men may seek the Lord.

The thought in the missionary's heart, then, should not be "India for Christ," or "Africa for Christ," or "the World for Christ," but the bringing to God from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, a people for his name. The great inspiration of a Christian worker is, "After this, I will return."

Does not the truly saved yearn for the appearing of the Lord? Is not the very height of his glory to see him coming in his majesty? Then, what is the better way? To stop trying to win men to him, and sit down and merely pray, inasmuch as the coming of the Lord will bring salvation to all men?

By no means. To be sure, we must pray for the coming of the Lord, but we must also work for it.

If the taking of the "world for Christ" is the missionary's motive, he must despair. Nineteen centuries of this era of grace have already passed, and yet there are more heathen today than there were in the days of Paul. The earth is filled with new and strange doctrines. Whereas, if the veneer were removed, we would find sin and lust just as heinous as in the long ago.

This is a man-glorying age. Wonderful achievements and startling progression are seen on every side, yet with all our learning, riches and advance of civilization, there is not a country, a city, nor even a hamlet, where Jesus truly reigns.

R3733 : page 70

No, brethren, the wheat and the tares must grow together to the end of this age. The mustard seed has grown into a great tree, but the birds of the air (representing the

wicked one and his children) roost in the branches thereof. The meal, to be sure, is good, but the leaven (sin) is contaminating the whole loaf. The drag-net which holds the evil as well as the good will not be separated until the consummation of the age.

Dear brethren, keep clearly before your mind that the work of the Church is to call out a people for his name; that the inspiration of this work is the glory of hastening the coming of our Lord, and that the coming of the Lord will bring to the Church her reward.

How the activities of the Church ought to be quickened. How her gifts should be increased. How her hand should be reached out in every direction until God from above shall say, The work of the Church is done, the witness to the uttermost part of the earth has been borne, the elect from the foundation of the world have been brought in, and the day of her reward is at hand!--Christian Index.

=====

R3733 : page 70

BEREAN BIBLE STUDY FOR MARCH.

--FOR EXPLANATION SEE PREFACE OF WATCH TOWER BIBLES AND WATCH TOWER, MARCH 1, 1905.--

STUDIES IN PRAYER

21. What is the cost of selfish prayers? Z.'02-250 (1st col. par. 1 to 3).

22. What is meant by "vain repetitions" in prayer? Z.'98-28 (2nd col. par. 2).

23. How may we be "instant in prayer"? Z.'97-265 (2nd col. par. 2 to 4); Z.'93-215 (2nd col. par. 2).

24. What does it mean to "pray without ceasing"? Z.'03-25 (1st col. par. 2, 3); Z.'04-118 (1st col. par. 1).

25. How should we understand, "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you"? Jno. 15:7. Z.'96-149, 150; Z.'04-234 (1st col. par. 3, and 2nd col. par. 1); Z.'05-124 (2nd col. par. 1, 2); F.679, par. 1, to 680, par. 2; Z.'05-343 (1st col. par. 3).

26. What relative privileges in prayer have justified and consecrated persons? F.681, par. 3, to 684, par. 1.

27. What privileges of prayer do the children of consecrated parents enjoy? F.531, par. 1, to 532, par. 2, and 684, par. 2.

28. How should we look out for the interests of each other through prayer? Z.'03-218 (1st col. par. 1); Z.'95-170 (2nd col. par. 2).

29. What is the relation between faith and prayer? Jas. 1:6; Mark 11:24; Z.'96-162 (1st col. par. 3, to 2nd col. par. 2); F.691, par. 2; Z.'05-345 (1st col. par. 2) (and 2nd col.)

30. What is the relation between prayer and thanksgiving?

Z.'03-8 (1st col. par. 2, 3); Z.'04-24 (1st col. par. 1); Z.'01-271 (1st col. par. 3).

=====

R3733 : page 70

BLESSEDNESS SUPERIOR TO HAPPINESS.

--MATTHEW 5:1-16.--MARCH 4.--

Golden Text:--"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

HAPPINESS describes the joyful moods which come to mankind from time to time, but blessedness relates to that permanent joy and comfort which are the result of the attunement of character to harmony with the divine. The people of the world may at times be happy, and at other times downcast, mournful and troubled; but to those who become followers of the Lord Jesus, and who as pupils in the school of Christ are taught of him, there is a peace of God which passes all understanding ruling in their hearts, bringing comfort and rest even under most adverse outward conditions. The lesson we are now considering describes to us the condition of heart necessary to the possession of the peace of God. In proportion as we get before our mental eyes the true conception and then strive to attain that ideal, in the same proportion will be the degree or progress of blessedness which will come into our hearts and lives to rule there and to keep us in the love of God.

Our Lord and his disciples were on an elevated plane of the mountain side, and crowds of people were coming to hear the message of the great Teacher respecting the Kingdom so long anticipated and which he declared was nigh. His miracles had attested his divine authority as a Teacher,

R3733 : page 71

and this drew the people to him "who spake as never man spake." (John 7:46.) Seeing the gathering multitudes Jesus went up the mountain onto a little mound, where he could the better be seen and heard by all. After the manner of olden times he sat down while making his address, the people also sitting down. The customs of the times favored this--loose, flowing robes, sandals easily removed, and the people accustomed to sitting with their limbs folded under them in what is sometimes styled "tailor fashion."

The teaching was addressed primarily to those nearest to the Lord, namely, his special disciples, the multitude interestedly watching for any items in the address that would specially enlighten them. It must have seemed strange to all the hearers that our Lord did not talk more about the Kingdom itself, explaining when and how it would be established, etc. But he knew that he must first suffer for the redemption of the world before the Kingdom could come and the divine will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. He

knew, too, that the first work in preparing for the establishment of the Kingdom would be the gathering of the Church class, the elect, to be his Bride and joint-heir in the Kingdom. His discourse, therefore, was so directed as to divide the hearers into two classes--some would be disappointed because they were interested more in the glories and honors and dignities of the Kingdom hoped for than in the condition of heart necessary to a place in it. These probably went their way saying that doubtless Jesus was a great Teacher to those who liked his kind of philosophy, but to them it was a very dry and unsatisfactory portion.

Others, though disappointed in the character of the teaching, found something in it which satisfied their longings as nothing else could do--found in it nourishment, comfort, upbuilding qualities. The same is true today: some hear the good tidings of great joy with interest merely in those features which relate to restitution. They are glad to know that there is no eternal torment in the divine plan, but that, on the contrary, times of refreshing are coming to the world, and times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21.) But aside from this, all discussion respecting consecration to the Lord and terms of discipleship, all descriptions of characteristic conditions that would fit them for the Kingdom, are wearisome to them, distasteful. Thus does the Truth always separate.

"THE POOR IN SPIRIT"

The message of this great Teacher differed from all others, and was especially attractive to the humble, the lowly. Whereas others would have said, Blessed are the rich, the learned, the prominent, the rulers, this great Teacher reversed the matter, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit" --blessed are those who are not self-conceited, who do not think very highly of themselves, who appreciate their own littleness and imperfection. Astounding! How are such blessed? Surely the world thinks little of those who do not think much of themselves! Surely they will make less progress in the world! Ah, yes! But, says the Master, their blessedness consists in the fact that they are of the Kingdom --of those from whom the Kingdom of heaven class will be selected.

Self-confidence, self-esteem, may win for its possessor a high and honorable place in the present time, but is disesteemed of the Lord; and those who have such a spirit will be the less prepared for the tests and conditions which the Lord will impose in selecting the heirs of the Kingdom, the joint-heirs with Christ. Yes, indeed!--there is a favor and blessedness associated with being little in one's own estimation: it preserves from many a false step into which egotism would lead. All who are seeking to follow the instructions of the great Teacher, who naturally are poor in spirit, humble-minded, deficient in self-esteem, have much advantage every way over others as respects this particular element of character. And those who are not naturally humble should take

heed to the Master's instruction, and humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that they may be exalted in due time. (1 Pet. 5:6.) The Lord's followers, then, should continually

R3734 : page 71

practise humility and be especially on guard against pride, self-conceit, etc.; they should know on the great Teacher's authority through the Apostle that God resisteth the proud and shows his favor to the humble, the poor in spirit, to such an extent that only the humble will share with the Lord in the inheritance of the Kingdom.--1 Pet. 5:5; Jas. 4:6.

MOURNERS BLESSED AND COMFORTED

Again it seems strange, contrary to the usual thought, to say "Blessed are they that mourn." The general thought is that those who mourn are to be specially commiserated. What principle lies behind the Master's assurance that there is a blessedness connected with mourning? We reply that we cannot suppose that there is mourning in heaven--we must suppose that there is happiness, blessedness there. Hence the blessedness of mourning must in some way relate to our present imperfect, sinful conditions and surroundings. Sin is in the world, and death, the wages of sin, is being paid out to the entire human family, carrying into every home more or less disappointment, sorrow, trouble. Where these are appreciated rightly there must surely be mourning. The world is sick and dying; with its twenty thousand million dead and sixteen hundred million dying in sorrow and pain and disappointment, he who is "merry" must surely be correspondingly irrational. Who but a foolish person could be merry in the shadow of such a charnel-house! Those who are merry under such conditions give evidence of so wrong a condition of heart and mind that we may know that they will require rigid disciplinary instructions (such as will be accorded to the majority of mankind during the Millennium) in order to bring them to their proper senses.

On the contrary, those who do mourn because of a realization of their own imperfections, their own fallen condition, and who to any extent mourn in sympathy with the poor, groaning creation, these have corresponding advantages because of their saner condition of mind; they will be the more ready for the heavenly message, telling of the glorious blessing that is to come through redemption in Jesus and through his Kingdom, which, as the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, shall bring in health, healing, life and comfort to all the families of the earth. Blessed are these mourners now, because they are in that much more favorable condition to hear the voice of him who speaketh from heaven--speaking peace through Jesus Christ our Lord. They shall be comforted. Their comfort shall not wait either until the new

R3734 : page 72

dispensation of the Kingdom shall be fully inaugurated and

bring in the blessings of restitution: their comforting will begin at once, for their mourning will bring a readiness of mind to hearken for the Lord's favor. So to these he will be pleased to make known something of the riches of his grace and lovingkindness through Jesus. They will have therefore the best opportunity for attaining the peace of God which passeth all understanding through the holy Spirit in this present time, and also in the dispensation to come.

Sorrow may be associated with sin and imperfection. It is proper that we should realize our fallen condition and be sorry for it, but this sorrow may be healed at once through the knowledge of the great redemption sacrifice and through our acceptance of a share in the merit of the same. But there is another sorrow or mourning which is not because of sin but because of sympathy. Our Lord, who was separate from sinners, had this spirit of mourning. It was this mourning in sympathy that led to his tears at the tomb of Lazarus, and the same that led to his being called "the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."--Isa. 53:3.

In our imperfect fallen condition, even after our hearts are fully consecrated to the Lord and imbued with his Spirit, it will not be possible for us to enter so fully into sympathy with others as did our dear Master; but we are to cultivate this spirit of sympathy, which is a part of the spirit of love, and the more we grow in grace and in character-likeness to the great Teacher the more we will have of the spirit of sympathy, the more sorrow and mourning will appeal to us. On the other hand, however, the more we receive of this same holy Spirit proportionately we will have the greater peace, the greater joy in the Lord and the greater rejoicing, because of what we will be increasingly permitted to discern in the unfolding of the great plan of salvation under which all who mourn in Zion shall be comforted. So, then, the most advanced Christians, who have the deepest and most holy joy, should be the ones who at the same time would have the deepest sympathy with mourning and sorrow. Who has not already noticed this, that as our Lord and Teacher is the exemplar of perfection, so those who most nearly imitate him are usually such as have had deep experiences in the school of sorrow and mourning, and in whose hearts and characters deep spiritual lessons and characteristics have been engraved?

The word comfort does not contain the thought of relief, but rather that of strengthen together, or added strength. In other words, the Lord does not propose to take from us that noble quality of sympathy which we receive in the school of experience, but he does propose for all those who become his true followers that they shall be comforted or strengthened together, that he will give them a blessing of strength to endure, which will compensate their mourning and spirit of heaviness. He gives this through the promises of his Word and the glorious hopes which he sets before us, and he gives it also through the living epistles of the dear members of the household of faith. Note how the Apostle calls this to our attention in 2 Corinthians 1:4, where many times over he repeats the thought of our comforting one another with

the comfort wherewith the Lord has already comforted us. Oh, what a privilege we enjoy, not only of being comforted by the Lord through his Word, but of being used of him as channels for comforting or strengthening or upholding one another during this mourning time, when some, more than others, have in themselves weaknesses and frailties to cause mourning to themselves and to others. Blessed are those who, being comforted themselves, shall be used of the Lord in the comforting of the other members of his body.

"BLESSED ARE THE MEEK"

The poor in spirit or humble minded, who do not think highly of themselves, are unquestionably the same as the meek, the gentle. The Century Dictionary defines the word meek as "self-controlled and gentle; not easily provoked or irritated; forbearing under injury or annoyance." Webster defines meekness as "submission to the divine will; patience and gentleness from moral and religious motives." As we look about us in the world and note the meek of the earth we do not see them more prosperous than others, and our Lord's words that such shall inherit the earth would astonish us and seem quite untrue if we did not understand that he referred to blessings beyond the present life. Surely the millionaires of earth, that own the larger portion of it and its riches, valleys and slopes, are very rarely to be counted as the meek. And so we see that the Master did not say, Blessed are the meek, for they do inherit the earth, but "they shall inherit the earth."

When, Lord?

Answer: When God's Kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven--then the meek shall inherit the earth. So, then, if we perceive that the rude, the unjust, the self-assertive, are grasping the bounties of earth in the present time, and if we find ourselves rather crowded out because of meekness, let us remember our Lord's Word that we are especially blessed, and let us cultivate this quality of meekness more and more, and let us not think to exchange it for a spirit of arrogance and self-assertion and vindictiveness, to grasp earthly fame and name and riches. Let us rather be content to cultivate this spirit which the Lord assures us he approves, and let us wait for the time when this class shall inherit the earth. We perceive that the inheritance will be with a view to giving it to the human family under the terms and conditions instituted during the Millennial age. Then the meek of the restitution class will inherit the earth; they will be given the advantage every way, and eventually all who are not meek will be utterly destroyed from amongst the people in the Second Death.

The meek ones of the Lord's followers even now in a measure receive the fulfilment of this promise, as the Apostle declared, "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. 3:22,23.) These have more enjoyment of the earth now than have others; while others are grasping these are enjoying. As the Apostle declares, "God hath given

us all things richly to enjoy." (1 Tim. 6:17.) Freed from the grasping spirit, we can pass through the streets and observe the rich displays of the shop windows without covetousness, without wishing that we had the various works of art and beauty under our special care and control. We can feast our eyes upon them and be without the care of them at a time when all of our talents are consecrated to the Lord and his service, and when we have more important things to do than caring for earthly trinkets called works of art.

R3735 : page 73

BLESSED THE HUNGRY AND THIRSTY

Our Lord refers to two of the most potent influences known amongst men. To what activity will not hunger and thirst spur us? Similarly there is in some a heart-hunger and thirst for that which is right, that which is true. The majority of people evidently do not have much of this hunger of the soul: natural eating and natural drinking are their special attractions. But all are not so, and there is a special blessing for those who have the soul-hunger to which our Lord refers. "They shall be filled"--they shall be satisfied.

Nothing in this promise implies a miraculous filling or satisfying: the thought connected with the illustration rather is that, hungering and thirsting, they will make use of their time, knowledge and opportunities for seeking the bread of eternal life, which satisfies, and the water of life, which truly refreshes; and that in proportion as these are sought and found and used will be the blessing. We have the Lord's guarantee of the blessing for all who are in the attitude of mind to seek and to use the spiritual refreshments he provides.

Righteousness here applies to right in every matter--Truth. God is the great standard of righteousness, and he communicates it through his Word, his exceeding great and precious promises delivered to us through Jesus and his apostles. The majority of the world, careful for the meat that perishes, think little of the Truth and get little of it; the few hungering and thirsting for it are filled, refreshed, sanctified by it, and in word and in deed and in thought are being fitted and prepared for still further blessings in God's due time--participation with the Redeemer in the Kingdom and a share with him in the work of blessing and uplifting mankind.

"BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL"

Mercy is akin to love, and in proportion as the fall has effaced love from any heart in that proportion mercy will be lacking. Of course we cannot always judge by the outward appearance, as there are outward forms and expressions of love without the heart. So sometimes mercy is extended without the real spirit of mercy prompting it. Sometimes it is to be seen through the recognition of a principle without a sympathy with that principle. The true Christian learns in

the school of Christ not only of his imperfections and his need of divine mercy, but having found that mercy and having entered the school of Christ it becomes one of the most important lessons he can learn to extend similar mercy toward others. The Apostle declares that "Mercy rejoices against Judgment"--against the execution of justice. (Jas. 2:13.) Strange as it may appear, those who have most need of mercy for themselves appear usually to be the ones least ready to accord mercy to the failures of others.

Contrariwise, those who grow most in the spirit of the Lord grow proportionately merciful and compassionate. Some of the Lord's people have more to overcome in this direction than have others, and may therefore show less development in proportion to their efforts; but the thought should be continually before the minds of all that it is very unbecoming for those who themselves have need of divine mercy to be sticklers in the last degree in their requirements of justice for others, in their refusal to exercise mercy toward others. Not only so, but this lesson which our Lord so frequently emphasized he intensified when he said, You do not from the heart forgive those who trespass against you, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses. He thus teaches us that our mercy must be more than formal, more than an outward forgiveness and reconciliation--it must be from the heart, sincere. In proportion, therefore, as we each realize our need of divine mercy through Jesus, in that same proportion let us be very merciful to others--especially toward the brethren and all who in any sense or degree demonstrate their desire for righteousness.

"BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART"

The word pure is very comprehensive--without adulteration, sincere, unsullied. No member of the human family is by nature in this condition. On the contrary, the Scriptures assure us that the heart of the natural man is exceedingly deceitful and desperately wicked. (Jer. 17:9.) The heart in this text and in general conversation is used not as the name of one of the organs of the human system, but as indicating the inner mind, will, intention of the person. As originally created man was the image of God, and hence was then pure in heart, sincere, honest, truthful, perfect-intentioned; but, by reason of disobedience, sin and selfishness have been developed in the human heart and will, and the God-like qualities originally there have been to a considerable degree obliterated. Hence it is that those who become the Lord's people are said to have a new heart, a new will, new ambitions, new desires. Where the conversion from sin to righteousness is thorough it is truthfully said, "Old things have passed away, all things have become new."--2 Cor. 5:17.

To accomplish so radical a change of will, of intention, requires a powerful influence. It may be of fear and it may be of love, but we are assured that the results of fear are imperfect, and that only love produces the lasting, perfect, acceptable conditions. Fear may have to do with the beginning of a change of heart, but it certainly cannot carry the

conversion to completion, for, as the Scriptures declare, "Fear hath torment," and the peace of God cannot rule in the heart that is subject to such distress. (1 John 4:18.) Hence the Scriptures set before us the heart conversion which results from the knowledge of God and love for him, saying, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and again assuring us that "perfect love casteth out fear."--Mark 12:30; 1 John 4:18.

Our Lord's words intimate that there may be various degrees of impurity of heart, and so we find it: there are some who at heart are really black, devilish; others are drab or gray or speckled. But the Lord singles out the kind of heart that would be acceptable to the Father--the pure in heart. We are all witnesses that we could not claim purity of heart, of intention, of motive, of desire for very many of our friends and neighbors of Christendom, and that so far as we know in the heathen world the proportion would be still fewer. Yet the intimation of our text is that only such as attain to heart purity can hope ever to see God, to enjoy this evidence of his love.

But lest some should be discouraged through supposing that purity of heart means absolute perfection of thought and word and deed, we hasten to correct that thought and to point out that the intention is not always supported by the words and conduct. To will right, to will perfectly, to be

R3735 : page 74

pure in heart, is quite possible, yea, quite necessary to all who would have divine approval; yet how to perform all that they will is sometimes beyond the ability of the Lord's most earnest followers. The new will, the new heart, must act and speak through the medium of the old body, whose affections are continually in opposition and must be battled against. Hence so long as we are in the flesh, so long as we are obliged to reason, speak and act through the imperfect medium of our fallen flesh, that long will we have need of the merit of Christ to continually cover its blemishes; that thus the new will, the new heart and not the flesh, may be judged of the Lord and tested as to its worthiness or unworthiness of the eternal life and blessings which he has proffered us.

How precious the thought, then, that we may attain to absolute purity of intention, of love, etc., toward all mankind as well as toward the Lord, and that God will thus accept us in his Beloved One, not counting to us the unintentional weaknesses and blemishes which we realize and which others realize perhaps still more than we. How blessed the thought that such will see God, that such have the clearest views of God's character and plan now, that such shall see him shortly when changed in the resurrection, when they shall have awakened in the likeness of their dear Redeemer.

BLESSED THE PEACEMAKERS

Never was there a time when this statement of our Lord deserved more consideration than at present. We live at a

time when envy and strife are in evidence on every hand, amongst all classes, amongst nations, in politics, in business, in homes and families, in nominal churches and amongst the fully consecrated of the true Church. The tendency toward strife is evidently somewhat associated with the strenuous times in which we live; but all the more those who are true members of the body of Christ are to remember the Scriptural injunction, "Follow peace with all men;" and again, "Be at peace amongst yourselves." (Heb. 12:14; 1 Thess. 5:13.) Some of the best people in the world have the organ of combativeness large, but proportionately they need to have love to control it, so that they shall combat only those things which are evil and injurious, so that they shall think generously, kindly, lovingly of all who take a different view of matters; and while standing always firm for principle, they should take note of the fact that principle enters into remarkably few of their conflicts, contentions, etc.

Each of the Lord's children should be learning day by day to cultivate the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit, amongst which prominently are patience, long-suffering,

R3736 : page 74

brotherly kindness, love. These things dwelling in us and abounding we shall be more and more pleasing to the Lord and able to assist others in the same direction--to be peacemakers. For who can properly be a peacemaker who is not himself at heart a peace lover?

There seems to be in the majority of humanity a contentious streak, which not only leads the possessor to be quarrelsome and contentious, irritable and irritating to others, but additionally this trait seems in many to be inclined to stir up disturbances in others, when the first principle of decency--minding one's own business--would be favorable to peace. As the Lord's people more and more come to realize the selfishness and quarrelsomeness which the whole world has inherited through sin and depravity, and how this is all opposed to the Spirit of the Lord and of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, love, they should not only strive to develop peace in their own hearts and lives but to be peacemakers amongst men.

"Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God." Yes, truly, the peace lovers, peace promoters, manifest that in this particular at least they are the possessors of the holy Spirit--the Spirit of God. Let us not only merit this title, sons of God, now amongst men who, seeing our good works and peaceable dispositions, will glorify our Father in heaven on this behalf, but let us by the continued cultivation of this same quality of love, under the guidance of the great Redeemer, merit the distinction of being sons of God on a higher plane in the Kingdom.

BLESSED THE PERSECUTED

Not all the persecuted, but merely the persecuted for righteousness' sake. Many bring upon themselves persecutions

for foolishness' sake and for being busybodies in other men's affairs. Let us heed the Apostle's word along this line and avoid persecutions or sufferings for evil doing of any kind; but, as again it is declared, if any man suffer as a Christian let him glorify God on this behalf. (1 Pet. 4:16.) It is well, too, that we preserve in this matter as in all others the spirit of a sound mind. There are, for instance, some that evidently imagine themselves persecuted when really they are very kindly treated, and are the victims of their own morbid imaginations. The Lord's people should be so filled with the spirit of thankfulness and gratitude and appreciation that they would be in no danger of erring in this matter. They should be so generous in their thoughts of the motives and intentions of their friends and neighbors that they would be in no danger of misapprehending them and feeling persecuted by those who are really their well-wishers.

As perfect love casts out fear, so also it casts out these false impressions of evil doing or intention toward us. The benevolent heart, full of love for others, will rather prefer to suppose that slights are unintentional oversights, or to put some other similar good construction upon the conduct of their friends, only yielding to an appreciation of persecution when its intention is unmistakable. Even then it should think generously of the persecutor, realize his share in the fall and be disposed to pray for those who despitefully use them and persecute them. Blessed are such ones who thus hold to righteousness and the spirit of love toward their enemies and persecutors, and who may be sure, therefore, that they are being persecuted for their fidelity to truth and righteousness and not for personal idiosyncrasies and peculiarities. Blessed are they, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. The Lord is looking for those who are so faithful to the principles of righteousness that they will exercise it toward their enemies even when being persecuted by them and on its account. If the Kingdom of heaven is for such it is assuredly but a little flock. Let us strive the more diligently to be of that little flock--to make our calling and election sure.

REVILED FOR CHRIST'S SAKE

The Lord's people are not to revile each other or anybody under any circumstances, but are to remember that they are pupils, followers of him who when reviled reviled not

R3736 : page 75

again. Whatever evil others may say or insinuate about us we must be faithful to our Teacher and not return evil for evil, reviling for reviling, nor insinuation for insinuation, but contrariwise must speak evil of no man and be pleased to notice and to mention any good qualities which even our enemies may possess.

Our Lord's words, however, warrant us in expecting that those who will be faithful to him will share his experiences of being evil spoken of. With his words before our minds we should not be surprised at false charges and false

insinuations made against his true followers, and that in proportion to their prominence as his servants and followers. The expression, "all manner of evil," is very comprehensive, while "for his sake," is worthy of notice. It does not imply that those who strike with the fist or weapon or tongue and who shoot out arrows, even bitter words, will say, We do this to you for Christ's sake and because you are one of his. We have never heard of any one persecuted in that manner along those lines, and this cannot therefore be what the Lord meant.

What he did mean evidently is that his followers, like himself, honorable, moderate, possessing the spirit of a sound mind, truthful, honest, virtuous, would naturally be highly esteemed amongst the Scribes and Pharisees, the nominally good; they would have a high place, were it not for their fidelity to the Lord and to his Word. Because of loyalty to truths contradictory of popular errors, because of their faithfulness to the Word of the Lord, they are unpopular, and, like the Master, are hated by those prominent in Churchianity. These conditions bring a double test:

(1) They test the adherents of Churchianity along the lines of the Golden Rule, and when they speak evil through malice, through hatred, through strife, through opposition, they are judging themselves, condemning themselves under the Golden Rule, for well they know that they would not wish others thus to speak evil of them;--either through malice or a concocted lie or through hearsay.

(2) It becomes a test also to the faithful ones--Are they willing to endure these persecutions and oppositions cheerfully as a part of the cost of being the Lord's disciples? If under the pressure they yield and revile in return, and slander and backbite, they are proving themselves unworthy of a place in the Kingdom. If on the other hand they receive these lessons and experiences with patience and long-suffering, these serve to develop in them more and more of the character-likeness of their Redeemer and tend the more to fit and prepare them for a share with him in his glorious Kingdom. Our Lord's assurance is that those who are thus tested and who stand such a test will have the greater reward in heaven, and reminds them that similar persecutions from the Lord's professed people came to all the holy prophets of the past.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

The declarations, "Ye are the salt of the earth," and "the light of the world," may be very properly applied to such of the Lord's followers as give heed to his teachings and cultivate the blessed states he has described foregoing. All such blessed ones in proportion as they have attained such conditions are indeed the salt of the earth and the light of the world. As salt is useful in arresting decomposition, so the influence of these, though they be few in the world, is preservative. Looking back along the aisles of history, we can see that a good influence extended from the Law Covenant God made with Israel.

As the Jews scattered more or less amongst other nationalities they carried with them more or less clear conceptions of the divine standards as represented in the Law, and these wherever they went had a preservative and corrective influence amongst men. But it was Jesus and his higher Law of Love, exemplified in his own life and in the lives of his apostles and all his followers, who became the real salt of the earth, in a period when without it we know not what might have been the result. As it is not only the spot upon which the candle or lamp rests that is enlightened by it, but as the rays extend out in every direction, so is the influence extending from every true Christian. It touches not merely his own person or home but to some extent radiates throughout his vicinity. Similarly it is not merely the spot that is touched by the lump of salt that is preserved, but the influence of that lump spreads over a considerable space round about it, and all with preservative influence.

At the time of our Lord's first advent the world was in a condition in which it would probably have hastened to degeneracy and corruption, but the introduction of the body of Christ and the beneficial influence extending from each member of that body were potent for the arrest of the demoralizing tendency of the times. The light which shone out from Jesus, the Light of the world, and from his followers, had undoubtedly a beneficial effect upon the then center of the civilized world. That influence is still manifest in so-called Christendom. And even today, although the truly consecrated believers in the great Redeemer are confessedly very few in number, yet the general influence, the saltiness from the teachings of the Savior, exercise a wide influence throughout Christendom. Without this, doubtless, corruption and a complete collapse would have come long ago. In spite of it we see very corrupting and corrupt influences at work in every direction and the wider our horizon,

R3737 : page 75

the more general our information, the more this fact will be appreciated.

Before very long we expect that all of the overcoming members of the body of Christ will be changed, glorified, and the body completed on the other side the vail will be without members on this side. The lights will have gone and the darkness will hold fuller sway than ever; the salt will be gone and the corruption will take hold swiftly, and the result will be the great time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.

Meantime we are to let our lights shine and thus to glorify the Father, whether men heed or forbear to heed; we are to exercise our salt or preservative influence, our influence for righteousness and truth, whether men hear or forbear, though we clearly see that it is not God's purpose to enlighten the world through the Church in its present humble position. The matter will test us and prove whether or not we are worthy to be members of the glorified body of Christ, which shortly shall shine forth as the Sun in the

glory of the Father, and enlighten the whole world in a manner
with which our little lamps of the present time will in
no sense compare.

R3737 : page 76

HO, PRODIGAL RETURN!

"Return, return! thy Father's voice is pleading,
 Tho' far astray, I bid thee turn again!
Thy robe is rent, thy tender feet are bleeding,
 Thy heart is faint and sick with famine pain:
Return, my child: a welcome here awaits thee:
 No longer in the distant country rove;
Resist the cruel tempter that belates thee,
 And keeps thee from my dwelling and my love.

"Return, return! Thy Father's loving-kindness
 Thou long hast scorned, and done his grace despite;
Yet in his touch is healing for thy blindness,
 And he can turn thy darkness into light.
Return in all thy rags of sin's defilement;
 Return with all thy want and sore distress;
Thy Father's voice bespeaks his reconcilement:
 Flee to thy Savior, and thy guilt confess.

"Return, return! Thy substance hath been wasted--
 Thou hast not aught to bring but thy poor heart;
Yet art thou longing for the bread once tasted,
 And for his paths of peace, and faith's good part?
Return, for why shouldst thou delay the pardon
 Thy Father's great compassion waits to grant!
Arise and go, before thy doubts shall harden
 The homesick yearnings of the penitent.

"Return, return! Leave thou the swine and famine
 And seek again the plenty of thy home!
Why dost thou toil among the husks of mammon,
 When to his rest the Father bids thee come?
Return thou to his arms, his kiss, his blessing,
 Accept the robe, the sandals, and the ring,
After thy sinfulness and guilt confessing,
 By Jesus found, lost treasure of the King!

"Return, return! The angel-hosts bend o'er thee--
 They wait to bear the tidings' joyful sound.
They have beheld the Savior dying for thee,
 And will rejoice to sing, The lost is found!
Return, for he will heal all thy backsliding--
 Will love thee freely, and will thus forgive;
Come, weary soul, rest in his love abiding,
 Thou hast been dead--arise to-day and live!"

=====

R3737 : page 76

LESSONS ON SELF-CONTROL.

--MATTHEW 5:33-48.--MARCH 11.--

Golden Text:--"Keep the door of my lips."--Psa. 141:3.

AGAIN we gather at the feet of the great Teacher of the school of Christ to hearken for his further instructions. In connection with his discourse on the beatitudes, which constituted our last lesson, the Master proceeded in the words of today's lesson.

Our Lord refers to the traditions of the ancients, which evidently had a great control over the people of that time. No fault is to be found with having respect for the opinions and teachings of those who have gone before us in life's pathway, but one of the important lessons for every Christian to learn is that the fact that a matter is ancient, that it has been long believed, is no positive proof of its correctness. The thoughts of ancient times are to be weighed and tested, as well as those of modern times by the one standard, the divine revelation--"If they speak not according to this word it is because they have no light in them."--Isa. 8:20.

The traditional teaching to which our Lord referred was not wholly erroneous, just as the traditions of the "dark ages" contain some elements of truth. Error alone is weak in comparison to error mixed with a little truth; hence our great Adversary usually endeavors to interweave some measure of truth with all the injurious falsehoods which have burdened the world for centuries, and still burden us in proportion as we are deceived by them. This was true in respect to the matter our Lord was discussing: the Law had something to say respecting the taking of God's name in vain, and tradition had modified the Law and limited it to false swearing. Our Lord called attention to the error, pointing out that the third commandment had a broader and deeper meaning than the tradition implied --that it meant that God's name should never be used in any irreverent manner, and not merely forbidding its use in connection with the violation of an oath in the Lord's name. Our Lord extended the thought, teaching his followers that they should not continue the custom of their day, of proving their assertions by appeals to God, to heaven, etc. The same lesson is for the followers of Jesus today: others may feel it necessary to emphasize their statements by oaths or expletives, but the followers of Jesus are to so live, so act, so speak, that their words pass for par anywhere and with anybody. To this end they must be absolutely truthful, so that whoever may hear them may know that their yea is yea and their nay is nay.

"SWEAR NOT AT ALL"

Oaths and solemn asseverations in the ordinary conversation of life imply that the truth of the speaker is questionable--that his yea is not always yea, and that his nay is not always nay. The tendency is to make him less careful in the ordinary statements of his conversation which are not thus solemnized; the effect is also to make him less reverent toward the Lord or the other holy things which he may call upon as witnesses, as evidences of his truthfulness. As the word of such people becomes common and liable to be broken, so their oaths would soon also become common and liable to be broken--such matters go on from bad to worse usually. On the contrary, where the word is held sacred the avenues of sin and error and falsehood are measurably stopped.

Nothing in this injunction can properly be understood to apply to the taking of an oath in a court of law. Such oaths, commanded by the law of the State, are necessary, because all have not the high standard of truth desired. But even in the courts of law in many States it is permitted that an affirmation may be made instead of an oath if any so prefer. To one of the Lord's people an affirmation must mean exactly the same as an oath; he would not affirm what he would not be willing to swear to. He recognizes that, as a follower of the Lord and one of his representatives, his yea or his nay must be as truthfully kept as his oath would be.

Whatsoever is more than yea or nay cometh from evil--the revised version says "of the Evil One." Indirectly all of our evil tendencies come from the Evil One,

R3738 : page 77

for was it not by his lie in Eden that the fall from perfection and the divine image brought us all into our present evil, imperfect condition, exposing us to error through our own weaknesses and imperfections and the weakness of our neighbors? While our Lord's injunction is good for all who have ears to hear it, it is especially appropriate to the little flock who have applied themselves to hearken to all of his commands, and to be taught of him, and, to whatever extent is necessary, to suffer with him in following the course of righteousness. Truly all such should be models of truthfulness and uprightness, and thus be burning and shining lights, glorifying our Father in heaven in their homes and in the communities where they live.

AN EYE FOR AN EYE

Another of the teachings of the ancients was that absolute justice should be rendered, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Some features of the Law did indeed imply this. If one caused an injury to another intentionally he should be maimed himself correspondingly.

This strict requiring of justice prevailed, not only amongst the Jews, but also amongst the Romans and the Greeks. It may be said to have been a juster law in some respects than those which now prevail, which indirectly favor the rich: for instance, the penalty today for injury to another might either be a fine of so much money or an imprisonment of so long a time. In either case the rich would have the advantage in that they could spare the money, and the loss of time would not be so disastrous to them as to the poor. However, there were disadvantages in a juster system of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth: it cultivated a feudal spirit, and led to anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, murder, works of the flesh and of the devil. Seeing what the strictest interpretation of justice would imply, let us see what the great Teacher would present as the preferable course of action.

Hear his words, "I say unto you, resist not evil [do not retaliate, rendering evil for evil], but whosoever shall smite you on the right cheek turn to him the other also." This is an astounding proposition--who can obey it? Even if we modify it all that language will permit, it is still apparently beyond reach of any fallen human being--it teaches the ideal requirements of the divine law of perfect love. When seeking for an interpretation of the expression, Resist not the evil doer, but turn the other cheek, we must look to our Lord and the apostles as examples. We find, for instance, that our Redeemer was smitten upon the cheek, and that while he did not literally turn the other he did not attempt to smite back, to retaliate even in word. In this indirect sense he did turn the other cheek. And this should mark our course. Our Redeemer did expostulate with his smiters in kindly terms, however, and we may properly follow his example, and consider it in full agreement with his instruction in this lesson.

We may remember him again when evilly entreated and taken to the brow of the hill to be cast headlong: he did not use his superior power to do injury to his opponents, but passed through their midst, evidently either directly or indirectly exercising over them a restraining influence, because his time for death had not yet come. So, too, we may use any moral influence we may possess to escape from the power of our enemies, and be assured that we will have the divine care and protection until our lessons and experiences are completed --until our time shall come to pass beyond the veil. Similarly the Apostle, learning of the threats of the Jews against his life, did not make threats against them nor pray evil upon their heads; but he did use such steps as were at his command to thwart their evil designs, sending word to the governor and invoking the power of the civil authority; and on another occasion he defended himself by appealing to the people.-- John 18:22,23; Acts 23:1-5,17.

The lesson for us is that we may use all lawful and legal means in our self-defense, and may even wisely run away from dangers and persecutors, as the Lord directed and the apostles exemplified. (2 Cor. 11:33; Matt. 10:23.) But we are not authorized to retaliate. Difficult as this proper course may appear, it undoubtedly will be found to be the best one. Remember our Lord's words, "They that take to the sword shall perish with the sword," and again the Apostle's words to the Church is, "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Matt. 26:52; Gal. 5:15.) The lesson evidently is,--

"FOLLOW PEACE WITH ALL MEN"

"If any man sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." The revisers translated this to mean that if any one is disposed to go to law with you and take away your coat you should settle with him, even though it deprive you of both coat and cloak. This lesson of submission, of non-resistance, is surely a very difficult one to thoroughly learn. We cannot doubt that many would take advantage of such a disposition, and that as a result he would have the bad end of many a bargain. However, this would not prove the Lord's counsel unwise even as respects the present life. The lesson upon ourselves would certainly be valuable as respects the development of the Master's graces, and how can we tell that the example would not be very potent upon those who might fraudulently, violently take advantage of our obedience to the great Teacher.

We know, too, that the Lord would be quite able to compensate us for anything we might suffer in way of loss in obedience to his directions, to whatever extent he might see would be to our advantage. We should never forget the two occasions on which the Lord told the disciples to cast in their nets after they had toiled all night and had caught nothing, and how on both occasions miraculous draughts of fishes were caught. He who is for us is more powerful than all they that be against us, and undoubtedly loyalty to him and obedience to his Word will prove eventually the better part. Let us remember also the proverb

R3738 : page 78

which says, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." (Prov. 11:24.) It is not always those who fight most strenuously for their rights that fare the best even amongst the children of the world.

"GO WITH HIM TWAIN"

The next injunction is not generally understood: it does not mean that we should be turned aside from the duties and affairs of life at anybody's bidding. In olden times certain magistrates, governors, etc., had the authority of law to press the service of the people for governmental work. For instance, note how Simon the Cyrenian was compelled to bear the cross for Jesus a certain distance. The word compel in our lesson is from the same Greek word, and refers to a similar legal compulsion; "commandeered" would be the modern way of referring to such a matter. Our Lord's injunction is that his followers should be so broad-minded, so liberal, so generous, that they would not only obey the legal commands but be ready to go farther--to do more than had been required.

In thus doing heartily, joyfully and agreeably all and more than would be commanded they would be exemplifying the generous spirit which represents our Lord and his teachings. By such breadth of sentiment they would be known as Jesus' disciples, who had learned of him. Indeed we may say that the whole trend of the teachings of the Lord and the apostles is in line with this, and opposed to stinginess and narrowness and selfishness--in accord with generosity, full measure, pressed down, heaped up and running over. The Christian measure would be nothing short, though it might be a little more. A Christian measure of anything must be full, never skimp. This is an element of the higher law, the law of love, and its spirit of generosity in our hearts.

In similar strain the great Teacher enjoins that we shall give and lend to those requesting. We cannot suppose that he meant that a parent should give a razor to the child which cries for it; we cannot suppose that the Lord meant that our loans or gifts would be such as would be injurious to the recipients. Love must be the basis of our conduct, as it is the very essence of the Master's law. We cannot think either that he meant that we should neglect the interests of our own homes and families in giving to others or loaning to them. We are bound to suppose that our Lord in this, as in all things, wished his followers to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. What he wished to enjoin evidently was that spirit or disposition which would have pleasure in loaning or giving to the needy, and which is so circumstanced as to be able to comply with such requests and would be glad to do so, using the proper discretion and judgment, as to time, place and persons. In other words, the spirit of Christ is a benevolent spirit and not a mean or stingy one, and all the Lord's people, more or less selfish, need to learn this. There are few perhaps who would be in any danger of injuring themselves or others immediately dependent upon them by any acts of benevolence.

"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR"

Love for the neighbor was a feature of the Law, and in enjoining this the traditions of the elders were quite right; but they added to it that an enemy should be hated, whereas the Law said nothing of the kind, but on the contrary enjoined that if an enemy's ox or ass or property of any kind were seen going astray or about to be injured they should be protected and assisted and held for the owner, even though he were an enemy, and even though at a considerable cost of time and trouble. Our Lord thus pointed out the real meaning of the Law, making it the more honorable, saying, "I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven." (The rendering of v. 44 here given occurs in the revised version, and is in harmony with the oldest Greek MS., which omits a part of this verse.)

If we are sons of God we must have his Spirit, his disposition. To whatever extent we lack this disposition to love and desire good to our enemies as well as to our neighbors we lack evidence of relationship to our Father in heaven and to our elder brother, our Redeemer and Teacher. Here again the lesson of benevolence comes in--we must be large-hearted, generous.

R3739 : page 78

How can we cultivate this necessary quality, especially if our natural dispositions are mean and selfish, very much fallen from the divine likeness in this respect? We reply that the entire course of instruction in the school of Christ is in this direction. To make us compassionate and sympathetic with others, we are shown our own littleness and weakness in the Lord's sight; to teach us how to be generous and forgiving to others, we have the illustration of God's mercy and grace and forgiveness toward us; to impress the matter upon us we are assured that our forgiveness and standing with the Lord can only be maintained by our cultivating this spirit and manifesting it toward our debtors and enemies.

We are to be generous with those who transgress against our rights and interests, our enemies. This does not mean that the Lord recognizes or treats his enemies with the same degree of blessing that he grants to his friends and his children, nor does it mean that we are to love our enemies in exactly the same sense that we love our bosom friends and companions. The Lord gives special blessing to those who are especially his, and we also may properly give more of our love and favor to those who are in accord with us. The lesson here again is large heartedness and generosity.

"LOVE THEM THAT LOVE YOU"

Our Lord points out that in merely reciprocating

the love of others we would come far short of the standard he sets us, and of the lesson we must learn if we would be his joint-heirs and companions in the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom. Publicans and sinners even love those who love them--he must be a very mean man who will return evil for good and hate

R3739 : page 79

those who love him. Even though such a standard were recognized in the world, of loving those who love us, it would not be appropriate to the Lord's followers; they must rise to a higher plane if they would be his disciples.

Similarly our greeting, our salutations, the civilities of life are to be extended not merely to our brethren either after the flesh or after the Spirit. We are to have kind intentions toward all, and to enjoy the privilege of extending these, expressing them, and thus comforting and refreshing all with whom we come in contact. Generosity again is the thought--breadth of character and nobility of conduct.

PERFECT AS FATHER IN HEAVEN

The last verse of our lesson caps the climax of all instruction, telling us that the copy which we are to consider and follow is that of our heavenly Father--we are to be perfect as he is perfect. Ah, yes! It would have been impossible for the great Teacher to have set us any other pattern or example or standard than the perfect one. And yet he knew that none of his disciples would ever be able in the present life and under present conditions of sin and death working in our mortal bodies to come up to this standard--to follow this copy. What then did he mean? We answer that he there set before us the perfect copy, with instruction that, in proportion as we love him and desire to have his approval, we should endeavor to pattern after the heavenly Father's character.

The fact that this endeavor would not bring perfect results could only redound in blessings upon us, by bringing us to a realization of our own imperfections and of our need of the covering of our dear Redeemer's robe of righteousness, until the time shall come when in the first resurrection change we shall be made like him, see him as he is, share his glory, and be able to perfectly reflect, as he does, the heavenly Father's perfection. Meantime all of our shortcomings that are unintentional are graciously covered from the Father's sight with the merit of our Redeemer, who stands as our pledge or guaranty that our endeavors to follow the copy are sincere, of the heart. The Lord will judge us worthy or unworthy of the resurrection--not according to the flesh, but--according to the endeavors of our hearts as New Creatures.

THE OLD COPY-BOOK

Years ago it was the custom in the public schools to furnish the children with ruled copy-books, with copper-plate engraved lessons at the top of each page. The lesson to the pupil was the copying of those perfect characters. Every modest child must certainly have felt abashed, timid, when receiving one of those lessons, from the realization that it could not produce characters that could at all compare with the copy. It was, however, explained that it was not expected that the child could duplicate the perfect copy, but that following the lines of the copy it would become more and more expert. How well this illustrates the Master's words, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect," and the way in which he intends that we should profit by the instruction.

Another lesson: It was the duty of the teacher to examine the work of the pupil, and surely in a majority of cases it was found that the best copy of the original was found on the first line, and that the work became poorer and poorer toward the end of the page. So it is with many in the school of Christ--the great Teacher perceives that their first endeavors to copy God-likeness at the beginning of their Christian experience was more successful than their subsequent attempts. Why? The answer is the same in both cases. The child neglected to look at the copy and merely looked at its own imperfect efforts, and hence the poor results. So with the pupils in the school of Christ--their poor results come from comparing themselves with themselves, and neglecting to keep constantly before their minds the perfect copy--"Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

As the earthly teacher reproved and corrected the pupil, so with much long-suffering and patience the Lord reproves and corrects the pupils in the school of Christ. Will not this explain many chastisements which are necessary for every son whom the Father would ultimately receive to home and glory, every one of whom must be conformed to the image of his Son, who is the express image of the Father's person? Let us, then, begin afresh, on a new page as it were, to copy the character-likeness of our perfect Father in heaven. Let us no longer look at ourselves and our past attainments, but, as the Apostle says, "Forgetting the things that are behind and pressing on toward the things that are before," let us labor with patience to learn the all-important lessons connected with our discipleship and the gracious hopes set before us in the promises of our Father's Word.

"KEEP THE DOOR OF MY LIPS"

Our Golden text presents an important thought.

The Lord's people find the tongue the most difficult member to bring into subjection, and therefore may well pray, "Keep thou the door of my lips." And if the prayer be sincere, from the heart, it will imply that the petitioner is doing all in his power in this direction himself while seeking the divine aid. And the divine aid comes in line with this lesson, and assures us that the lips are not at fault, that it is the heart that needs a completion of the regenerative work of the holy Spirit, for "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The lesson here is that whatever difficulty we have through our lips needs correction at the heart. We need to get our hearts more in accord with the heart of the Almighty--more in tune with the gracious elements of the divine character, represented not only in justice toward others, but additionally in mercy, love, kindness and benevolence towards all.

=====

page 81

SEMI-MONTHLY.
VOL. XXVII. MARCH 15, 1906 No. 6

CONTENTS.

Views from the Watch Tower.....	83
Is the Moral Supremacy of Christendom in Danger?.....	83
Communism and the Bible.....	84
Palestine Opened to Jews.....	84
Signs of Depravity in Coming Generation.....	85
Rifle Range Under a Church.....	85
Spiritism is Aggressive.....	85
One-Day Convention Reports.....	89
The Chestnut Burr (Poem).....	89
Punishing Fellow-Members.....	89
Infallibility and Church Eldership.....	90
A Lesson on Temperance.....	92
"Take Heed How Ye Hear".....	92

page 82

LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.
BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND REMITTANCES

--ADDRESS TO--

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

--OR TO--

BRITISH BRANCH--24 EVERSOLT ST., LONDON, N.W.
GERMAN BRANCH--MIRKER STR., 45, ELBERFELD.
AUSTRALASIAN BRANCH--32 JOHNSTON ST., FITZROY, MELBOURNE.

PRICE, \$1.00 (4S.) A YEAR IN ADVANCE.
MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, BANK DRAFT, POSTAL ORDER, OR REGISTERED.
FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY.
TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR AS FOLLOWS:--

All Bible Students who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity or adversity, are unable to pay for this Journal, will be supplied FREE if they send a Postal Card each June stating their case and requesting its continuance. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list continually and in touch with the Studies, etc.

=====

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER AT ALLEGHENY, PA., POST OFFICE.

=====

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED IN THE
FRENCH, GERMAN, SWEDISH, DANISH AND ITALIAN LANGUAGES.
SAMPLE COPIES FREE.

=====

R3741 : page 82

A PLEASING CORRECTION.

In our issue of Feb. 15th, page 52, notice an article headed "VERY SAD IF TRUE," relating to President Faunce of Brown University. One of the brethren acquainted with the gentleman called his attention to it, and reports to us that the truth of the report is emphatically denied. We are glad of this, and will be very pleased if the brother will obtain from President Faunce a brief statement of his views of the Atonement over his own signature; we will be pleased to give it publicity in these columns. Our report, it will be noticed, was taken from the columns of "Watchword and Truth," a Baptist journal of good reputation, and seemingly in close touch with Dr. Faunce's opinions.

COLPORTEUR WORK IS GREAT

Evidently now is the special time for the promulgation of the Good Tidings of the Kingdom. Every avenue seems to be opening wider than ever before. The Colporteur work is showing remarkably: Much of this is due to some new methods very recently adopted. Now every laborer of zealous heart is being prospered. Still there is room! If you are free of earthly encumbrances or nearly so, and long for this service, write to us at once for our "Special Instructions." If you at one time tried the work and failed of success, put yourself under our present instructions and you will surely succeed. If possible send us your photograph: indeed, we now have a large

photograph cabinet at the Bible House, and will be glad to have photos of all WATCH TOWER readers willing to send them. Write your name on back of photo.

=====

R3739 : page 83

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

IS THE MORAL SUPREMACY OF CHRISTENDOM
IN DANGER?

FROM THE "HIBBERT JOURNAL"

IT has become the plain duty of Christendom to realize that her hold on the moral supremacy of the world is not so secure as many of us imagine. There is room, nay, opportunity, for a rival candidate. That the Christian ideal of moral excellence is splendid, even unsurpassed, no one doubts. But no less certain, no less striking, is the failure of the West to justify that ideal, both in national and private life. The sense of dissatisfaction which this failure has produced has entered deep into the moral consciousness of Christians all the world over; and if the impression has been deep in the case of those who profess and call themselves Christians, it has been yet deeper with the multitudes who have turned their backs on the Church. I rate this feeling among the greatest of the forces now moving the minds of men. Other things may create a louder noise, but this works revolutions. The question of theological standards is being merged into that of the moral, and we are being summoned, as never before, to find the correspondence between our professions and our lives. Such a state of things exposes Christendom to a rival challenge, and marks the fitting moment for another claimant to appear on the scene. If outside the pale of Christendom there should arise the example of a saner, nobler, more rational, more joyous, more humane, more self-controlled way of life than the West has so far achieved, the minds of men are prepared to greet its appearance as no act of

R3740 : page 83

presumption, but as a divine fulfilment of the urgent needs of mankind.

* * *

If any reader of this paper should conclude from what has been said that I regard the rise of Japan as the most important event in religious history since the

call of the Gentiles, he will so far correctly understand my drift.

* * *

The contention is that a serious challenge to the moral hegemony of Christendom is not, a priori, impossible; that such a challenge has actually been offered; that Buddhism, represented for the moment by Japan, is even now in the field as a claimant for that position which the vast majority of Christians regard as the indisputable birthright of their own religion. What verdict history will finally pass upon this claim no one can tell, no one should try to tell. Enough for the present that the claim has arisen; that it lacks no element of seriousness; that it has been forced on the attention of the world in a fact-language which admits of no mistake.

The potentates of Europe will hereafter have reason to think twice before shaking their mailed fists in the face of the Far East. But not for her guns alone, nor the way she handles them, is Japan to be feared. The "Yellow Peril" is an ethical phenomenon. Far more significant than the efficiency of Japan in arms is the advent into the world's history of a people possessed of a disciplined will in combination with the highest order of intelligence. An observer has declared that the greatest brains in all the world are to be found at this moment in Japan. But a great brain is no guaranty of efficiency; isolated from other gifts, it may even become the ruin of its possessor. This, however, is not the case with Japan; her purpose and her intelligence are one. She has shown herself great not only in conceiving her end but in pursuing it. She has poured her energies into her ideals. Thus she rises up in possession of all that we mean by character; and it is in the strength of character rather than in the strength of arms that she now challenges the world.

Praise of Japanese virtue is at this late hour admittedly superfluous. But none the less a prudent man will not cease to observe the facts, nor grow weary in his study of their meaning. He will be quick to notice that Japan has impressed Europe by qualities higher than those which pertain to martial valor. To very many persons--I think to the masses of the people--it appears that Japan in her hour of trial has shown a degree of calmness, moderation, self-restraint, and dignity which are strange to the working moral standards of Europe, and beyond what we have been accustomed to expect. Her armies and navies have taught the world many lessons in the making of war, and she has won an equal glory by showing how the people who

R3740 : page 84

stay at home should behave themselves while the war

is being made. By what she has refrained from doing, no less than by what she has done, she deserves our respect. In no act of that appalling drama has she allowed herself to play to the gallery. She has not made a spectacle of her fight-for-life; she has encouraged no reporters to witness the shedding of heroic blood; but as though some terrible operation of surgery were in progress, she has repulsed the sightseer and locked the door. In all these respects she has not copied an example previously given, but set a new one to the civilized world.

* * *

It will scarcely be doubted that the impression has gone very deep, and that great changes are bound to follow in many of our accepted ways of thought. The working classes of our own country in particular, never prone to rate too highly either the bona-fides of their religious instructors or the practical value of the instruction given, have undoubtedly found here a new reason for distrusting the moral efficacy of the Christian religion. And not among the working classes only, but everywhere one may observe a growing readiness to compare the respective moral harvests of the East and the West, with the result that Western society sees with cleared vision the scantiness of the domestic crop and the general nakedness of the land. A new point has been given to the arrows of the sceptic: has he not indeed been provided with a new poison for his barbs? The astounding divorce between the ethical ideals of Christendom and its normal practice, the liberty of interpretation with which the first principles of Christian morality are misapplied to our social life; the freedom, amounting to effrontery, with which one thing is professed and the opposite practised; the disgraceful sophisms by which the Christian conscience is taught to be blind to its own faithlessness--these and many other truths of a like nature, once apprehended only by a small and neglected company, have during the last three years been revealed in their true colors to tens of thousands of persons who never thought of them before. Who can doubt that the crisis which has so long been in preparation for Christianity has been brought appreciably nearer by these things--so near, perhaps, as to be even now at the doors?

COMMUNISM AND THE BIBLE.

"The relation of Christianity to Communism has become a question for thoughtful people to consider seriously, if they wish to preserve their intellectual candor and self-respect in adhering to the religion of Jesus." This statement is made by Prof. Henry Van Dyke in his new volume of

"Essays in Application." The new type of communist, he says, is more insidious than the old, because, having "laid aside the red cap and put on the white cravat," he "discusses the problem of organization of society on ethical and religious grounds." The law of private ownership the communist denounces as "essentially immoral and irreligious, because it protects and rewards a form of selfishness." He further claims that the "teachings of the Bible are against it, and that the Spirit of Jesus, who was really a great Socialist, is altogether in favor of common ownership." Entertaining the contention for the sake of its implied conclusion the writer states that:

"If property is theft, according to the teachings of Jesus, then the Church itself, like the Temple of old, has become a den of thieves. If the animus of the New Testament is distinctly communistic, then every honest Christian is bound either to give up his faith in the holy Scripture or to obey its doctrine, not only to the letter, but in the spirit, and to work with those who are seeking to establish a new order of society in which private possessions shall be unknown."

The writer admits two cases possible of citation to prove that the Bible has at least a partial leaning toward the communistic theory. They are the Hebrew Year of Jubilee, "which is used as an argument for the nationalization of the land;" and the example of the members of the early Church at Jerusalem who "were together and had all things in common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them all, as every man had need." Considering these two cases, however, Dr. Van Dyke asserts of the first that, "looking at the Year of Jubilee as a possible model for legislation in our times, we see that it was simply an iron-clad law of entail, more rigid than England has ever known;" and the early Church "was a fraternal stock company for mutual aid and protection." The Old Testament, he declares, holds out scanty encouragement to the advocates of Communism. The Gospels seem to contain even less. He writes:

"There was a man in Bethany named Lazarus, who had a house in which he sheltered the Christ whom the community had rejected. There was a man named Zaccheus, who was rich and who entertained Jesus at his own house. Is there any suggestion that the Master disapproved of these property owners? There was a man named Joseph of Arimathea, who had a garden and a new sepulcher in which he made a quiet resting-place for the body of him whom the people had despised and crucified. Was he a selfish robber?"

"Christianity never would have found a foothold in the world, never would have survived the storms of early persecution, had it not been sheltered in its infancy by the rights of private property, which are founded in justice, and therefore are respected by all lovers of righteousness, Christian or heathen. It is difficult to see how the religion of Jesus could have sanctioned these rights more emphatically than by using them for its own most holy purpose."

More emphatically still the writer declares his belief in the antinomy that exists between the communistic creed and the doctrine of the Bible, and especially that assertion which

declares that Christ was at heart a communist. He says:

"There is a fundamental and absolute difference between the doctrine of the Bible and the doctrine of Communism. The Bible tells me that I must deal my bread to the hungry; Communism tells the hungry that he may take it for himself. The Bible teaches that it is a sin to covet; Communism says that it is the new virtue which is to regenerate society."--Literary Digest.

PALESTINE OPENED TO JEWS.

Our readers are aware that for fourteen years the Sultan of Turkey has kept Palestine closed against the Jews. None of the Jewish race was allowed to become a resident: a limited number were granted visiting privileges of about 30 days and these were sometimes renewed, but no Jewish settlers were accepted. Now, according to the cablegram below from the public press, all this is changed and Jews may establish themselves in Palestine or elsewhere throughout the Sultan's

R3741 : page 85

dominions. No doubt this will mean a great rush of Hebrews from Russian persecution to the Holy Land, and just at the opportune time--"in due time," as our motto for this year has it. We quote the cablegram:--

SULTAN OPENS PALESTINE TO JEWISH COLONISTS

Constantinople, March 3.--The Sultan has opened the gates of Palestine to the wandering children of Israel, by signing an edict permitting them to establish themselves in any part of the Ottoman empire.

As a sign of protest against the cruel treatment of Russia toward the Jews, the Sultan ordered the officers at the different boundaries of the empire to allow the Jews entrance with or without passports.

The Russian Zionists sent a delegation to Turkey and Egypt to prepare everything for a systematic emigration from the Czar's empire into the new land of promise.

SIGNS OF DEPRAVITY IN COMING GENERATION.

"Paris, France.--Sociologists and criminologists are greatly worried at the many signs of depravity in the growing-up generation. Crimes among children are increasing at an alarming rate, and that not only among the children of the slums of the great cities, brought up among demoralizing surroundings, but even among the children of smaller towns and villages. Since January last 15 murders have been committed by children less than 16 years of age, one more shocking than the other."

* * *

It would be as unfair to blame all the increased and increasing depravity of children upon the modern Sunday School, as to blame all the increase of crime and immorality amongst the young people of our day to the Epworth League, the Baptist Young People's Union and the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor.

ON WHAT, THEN, SHOULD WE LAY THE BLAME?

It would seem hard, too, to charge these things to the fact that our Methodist friends are boasting that they are building more than a Church every day. It would be equally unfair to charge the great increase of crime throughout Christendom to the efforts of any other denomination or to any people who outwardly teach and favor good morals.

Education surely opens the mind to greater opportunities for evil doing if the heart be unregenerate and wicked. But neither can we blame all on that which, rightly used, proves such a blessing to others.

If we should conclude that none of these influences should be faulted, we at least must agree that the dear people of God connected with all these who have hoped that they would prove world-converting agencies have every reason to feel disappointed and to look more closely to the Lord's Word to see how he proposes to bring in the Millennium. When human hopes, ingenuity and efforts frustrated, defeated, result in chaos and anarchy, then man's extremity is to be God's opportunity, the Scriptures assure us. While therefore doing what we severally can to offset evil with good let us trust in the Lord and wait patiently for his time and way.

RIFLE RANGE UNDER A CHURCH.

The Rifle Club gospel is not confined to the elementary school and to secular education. When speaking lately at the men's meeting at Bloomsbury, Mr. Silas Hocking produced a photograph of a rifle range presented by the Mayor of Westminster, and arranged in the vaults under St. Martin's Church. "We are getting on," said Mr. Hocking. "We have the Gospel of Peace upstairs and the Gospel of War downstairs--the Crucifix in the chancel and the guns in the vaults below. The Church," he continued, "had surrendered to the spirit of the world." Christianity said: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." The modern spirit said: "Blessed are the warmakers, for they shall be called patriots and Big Englanders." John Bright said force was no remedy, but pompous little people who posed as politicians to-day seemed to think it was the only remedy. Conscription was universal serfdom

in the interests of the autocrats.--Herald of Peace.

=====

R3741 : page 85

SPIRITISM IS AGGRESSIVE.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago we pointed out the Scripture evidences that Spiritism would be one of the terrible deceptions of the end of this age. Evidences to this effect multiply daily. The outlook is so terrible that we must warn all within our reach to beware of everything connected with the occult--Hypnotism, Spiritism, etc. All they ask is INVESTIGATION--"they do the rest." The Bible is our only proper point of contact with the unknown spirit world, and it warns us to have nothing to do with the wicked spirits which deceptively personate the dead, who "know not anything." --Eccl. 9:5.

By reason of having followed heathen fallacies and neglected the Bible, Christendom is peculiarly in danger along this line. Believing that the dead are not dead, but more than ever alive, they naturally expect personal interest in their affairs, and in the advice which deceptive spirits most cunningly offer to mislead them. This is one of the "strong delusions" of our day, which only the consecrated ones, guided by the divine revelation, will be able to resist steadfastly: and even "the very elect" would be deceived were it possible;--but God's providence makes this impossible.

SAME METHOD AS IN EVOLUTION THEORY.

Notice the method by which the Evolution theory led on to Higher Criticism infidelity, which now rules in one-half the pulpits of Christendom and is rapidly grasping the remainder and the rank and file of all the cultured. Did not noted scientists carry the torch and guide the way? And is it not the same now with Spiritism?

While in Great Britain a prominent Episcopalian minister is relating to the public his experiences in spirit communication, even to the extent of having

R3742 : page 86

parcels transported for miles and delivered in an instant, in our own land the Rev. R. Heber Newton, D.D., declares that he has had sufficient proof to convince him that spirit-communication with the dead is possible and probable, and that he favors scientific research on the subject. And the Rev. I. K. Funk, D.D., one of the most prominent Methodists, declares that he has been and still is investigating spirit phenomena.

Dr. Funk's latest pronouncement on the subject,

published in the leading newspapers of January 22, is:

"Dr. Richard Hodgson has kept his promise to the Psychical Society. I have had a most remarkable interview with him, and talked with him in his spirit form last night for ten minutes, as agreed upon before his death. I stood face to face with his spirit, and he told me all was well with him. No one can any longer reasonably doubt that the spirits of the dead communicate with the living."

The account assures us that the interview took place very early Sunday morning between midnight and one o'clock. We wonder if Rev. Dr. Funk or others of the Psychic Society ever sought as persistently for the Truth in the Word of God! Yet it is still true, "He that seeketh findeth;" and the thing sought is generally the thing found. Let us not seek with those who have familiar spirits, but to the living God for our counsel. --Isa. 8:19.

We quote from the public prints as follows:--

"It is true,' cried the Rev. Mrs. Pepper, exultingly, last night. 'The spirit relation with Dr. Hodgson has been established. From the dead he has come back, not in the material sense, of course, but he has actually communicated with us from the beyond as he promised. After weeks of trying we have succeeded. The world could ask for no greater proof.'

"The seance at which Dr. Hodgson's spirit is said to have come back to earth to make good the promise made by him, was held shortly after midnight yesterday morning at the home of Mrs. Pepper, at No. 258 Monroe street, Brooklyn.

"Only the head of the Spiritualistic Church and Dr. Funk were present. For weeks the two had striven to enter into conversation with the dead man, but some atmospheric disturbance always caused failure.

"Suddenly, Dr. Funk and Mrs. Pepper declare, the longed-for communication was established. It was while the minds of both were intensely concentrated on the subject. The room in which they were was absolutely quiet, and it seemed that the session must meet with failure, like the ones previous, when suddenly, they declare, Dr. Hodgson's spirit responded to the summons.

"My soul was filled with rapture,' Dr. Funk declared. 'I realized that I and I alone had been the fortunate one to receive Dr. Hodgson's long-promised message. It was unfortunate that Mrs. Pepper had to leave the room, else she, too, would have talked to him.'

PSYCHIC STUDENTS INTERESTED

"No more intensely absorbing problem has ever confronted the fraternity of the psychic societies at large and caused more curiosity on the part of the lay public who have been watching the case than Dr. Hodgson's promise to communicate with his fellows from

the spirit world.

"Dr. Hodgson was president of the Society for Psychic Research, and his promise aroused world-wide interest. Dr. Hodgson fell dead while playing baseball in Boston, on December 20. Four weeks passed and nothing was heard from him. Branches of the Psychic Society in various cities of the country were making constant effort to enter into spiritual communication with Dr. Hodgson.

"In life Dr. Hodgson made every possible effort to communicate with those who had gone before. He approached every new manifestation of the supernatural with the mind of a skeptic. He would not believe in anything unless it could be proved to his own analytical mind.

DEVOTED LIFE TO THIS PROBLEM

"He dealt Theosophy the hardest blow it ever received by denouncing Mme. Blavatsky as a fraud, and proving that the so-called supernatural things which she performed were the simplest kind of artifices. Yet he firmly believed that he had many times communicated with the dead, and he devoted his life to the proof of the theory that intercourse between the living and dead was possible. Many times prior to his death Dr. Hodgson openly declared that he would certainly put the question to the proof by personally communicating with some member of the Psychic Society from the world beyond.

"On Dec. 20, when Dr. Hodgson fell dead, he was at the Union Boat Club, apparently in the best of health. Heart disease took him off in the twinkling of an eye. When four weeks had passed and no word came from the mysterious bourne beyond the veil, some of the weaker members of the Psychic Societies began to doubt that the communication would ever be established. The stronger members of the cult declared that Dr. Hodgson had not yet got into complete accord with the spiritual world because he had not been dead long enough to have found the proper 'communicator.'

"Dr. Hodgson in life usually communicated with the dead through Mrs. Leonora Piper, the noted Boston medium, who proved unsatisfactory to him occasionally, however, because but few of the spirits would send messages through her.

"It had been expected by those who were the most intimate with the Boston psychist in life that his first manifestation, if ever made, would come through James H. Hyslop, former professor of logic, ethics and psychology at Columbia University. Prof. Hyslop was one of Dr. Hodgson's friends and intimate co-workers in the field of psychic research. Both served on the committee appointed to determine whether Mrs. Piper, America's most famous medium, really communed with the dead or was just a clever fraud. Both arrived

at the same conclusion, that Mrs. Piper was all that she claimed to be. Dr. Hodgson and Professor Hyslop attended seventeen sittings at which Mrs. Piper demonstrated her power, and the report made by them was as follows:--

"The theory of fraud is not tenable in the case."

THE CUNNING OF THE SCHEME

Note the cunning of the "lying spirits." (2 Thess. 2:9.) They not only get hold of the most prominent men possible, but they use them well for world-wide advertising. For instance, the seance with Dr. Hodgson could as well have taken place the day after he died (or the day before, for that matter) as a month after, so far as the deceiving spirits were concerned; but the delay was to arouse curiosity and deepen interest. The delay of a month, the correspondence between the prominent people of the Society for Psychical Research, the questions, hopes, fears, midnight vigils with mediums, now called "sensitives," all whetted expectancy

R3742 : page 87

and made the matter ten-fold more notable than it otherwise would have been. Even now the message is to be held back awhile until the public is anxious for it.

AUSTRALIA NOT OVERLOOKED

The demon-spirits seem specially to angle for the English-speaking peoples. Thus far-off Australia is having its full share of attention, and some of the most pronounced manifestations of power yet made anywhere. Well-attested accounts are published to the effect that a Mr. Stanford, brother to Hon. Leland Stanford (deceased), founder of Stanford University, has recently found a "sensitive" through whom he was able to secure remarkable manifestations of spirit powers. The published accounts show that at seances covering several nights, and at which various prominent persons were present, miracles were performed by the spirits for the asking. For illustration, a sea-fish, still alive and wet with salt water, was deposited in a closed room by unseen spirit hands. Rare ancient coins, etc., of Egypt were deposited within a few seconds after the expression of the request. A bird on the nest with its young, the latter still asleep, was similarly presented, claimed to be from India.

The curios from Egypt and India are claimed to have great value; and the newspapers have been kept busy telling that Mr. Stanford had offered the collection, free, to the College founded by his brother; that the President of the University had declined them because of the manner in which they were obtained (the conduct of the latter has been denominated bigotry); and

finally the said Chancellor of Stanford University has publicly denied that the curios have yet been tendered. All this has stirred up talk respecting the occult as never before in modern times. Whoever is guiding these wicked spirits shows great sagacity and insight into human conditions.

THE LONDON DAILY MAIL'S SAY

The London "Daily Mail" of January 23 devotes nearly a page to this topic, "Are the Dead Really Communicating?" --heading it with the likenesses of "Three Famous Scientists Who Encourage Psychical Research --Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr. A. R. Wallace and Prof. Crookes." We give some extracts from the article as follows:--

MENTAL, MORAL AND PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF SPIRITISM. ALL BAD.

"It is daily becoming more and more evident that of all the problems that are at present agitating the public mind the one presented by spiritism and by modern psychical investigation is having the preeminence.

"The interest in the subject, although for obvious reasons not very apparent in the surface-movements of life, is nevertheless a keen and a widespread one and is growing in intensity day by day.

"In view of the unhesitating testimony recently given by savants of high standing and of European reputation, increasing numbers of skeptically inclined persons are reluctantly abandoning their attitude of reserve and are beginning to realize the seriousness of the subject and its far-reaching issues.

R3743 : page 87

"The consequence is that the study of occult subjects and the search and craving for phenomena is daily growing apace, and that a voracious appetite for literature in any way bearing upon these subjects is being created. In thousands of families the 'spirit circle' is an honored institution, and the reception of messages from 'departed friends and relatives' is becoming an everyday occurrence.

"How very deeply these practices and the results flowing from them are affecting the mental and moral life of the community is only known to those who are intimately connected with the movement and who have opportunities of looking behind the scenes. And it must be admitted that, strange as such a phenomenon may appear at first sight, it is one at which we cannot be very much surprised.

"When one bears in mind the natural tendencies and cravings of the human heart, the innate desire of most men to have some definite answer to the whence and whither of human life, the doubts on the other

hand which recent research has aroused, and the general tendency of modern rationalistic thought to destroy belief in the supernatural, one can scarcely wonder at a universal and growing interest in phenomena increasingly believed to be a means by which the age-long question of man will be answered, and by which the fact of a future life will be established on a sound, scientific foundation.

"Now what, briefly, are the facts of the case at this present time?"

SCIENTIFIC OPINION

"English science, it is well known, has, broadly speaking, given its verdict. We have it on the authority of men whose veracity cannot be doubted, and whose scientific authority no one can reasonably call in question--who, moreover, have risked their reputation in giving their testimony--

"1. That the much-disputed phenomena occur, and that many of them are of an objective and tangible character.

"2. That they are often governed by intelligence --that intelligence in many instances extraneous in its nature and operations.

"This testimony is being added to day by day by the published writings of eminent foreign scientists, and it is being confirmed by thousands of intelligent spiritists and of private investigators all the world over. 'The alleged facts,' writes Professor A. R. Wallace, 'which the scientific world scouted and scoffed at as absurd and impossible now, one after another, prove to be real facts, and, strange to say, with little or no exaggeration, since almost every one of them, though implying abnormal power in human beings, or the agency of a spirit-world around us, has been strictly paralleled in the present day and has been subjected to the close scrutiny of the scientific and skeptical with little or no modification of their essential nature.'

"It was, of course, to be expected that testimony of such a character, and coming from such unlikely quarters, would powerfully affect the public mind, and that it would, in the course of time, give rise to questions of the gravest possible import.

ARE THE DEAD COMMUNICATING?

"The greatest of these questions--and, indeed, the one which may be termed the burning question of the hour--is the one which has reference to the nature and aim of the intelligence which is displaying itself. Is it human in character--in other words, are the dead communicating, and are we by these means receiving demonstrative evidence that there is life and a world beyond the grave?"

"It is impossible for those who are familiar with

the subject and with the results of the most recent investigations to doubt that science itself is tending in the direction of an affirmative answer to this question.

R3743 : page 88

If a certain learned reserve still characterizes official statements, it is difficult not to read between the lines and to see what the ultimate verdict is likely to be.

"The pronouncements of individual scientists, speaking in their private and personal capacity, can leave no room for doubt in the matter. And the cry which they have sent forth has found an echo in thousands of human minds, and has given an impulse to the spiritistic movement, the effects of which are but too plainly and painfully visible in every sphere of our social life. Indeed, so strong are the impressions created that the utmost impatience is being exhibited toward those who would raise a note of warning and who cannot join in the exultant cry of the multitude.

"Ignorance, prejudice, religious bigotry, and narrow mindedness are the epithets applied to persons who, while admitting the actuality and intelligence of the phenomena, nevertheless deny that it has been shown to be that of the dead.

A DISSENTIENT VOICE

"And yet it is manifest from the evidence at our disposal that there are incontrovertible facts pointing in this direction, and that this is an aspect of the subject which should awaken in thoughtful minds the most serious considerations. I can but briefly indicate what an experience of nearly twenty years has taught me, and why I cannot share the popular view as to the nature of the mysterious phenomena under consideration.

"1. It is certain that the identity of the communicating intelligences has not been established. Although it is admitted that in practically every instance the entities claim to be the spirits of departed men and women it is certain that that claim has invariably broken down in the presence of real test conditions. The most recent psychical research in this direction has yielded wholly negative results. Those whose names were best known in spiritistic and psychical research circles and who have practically spent their lives in the search for such evidence, have, after death, been unable to furnish it themselves. They have not found it possible to supply what may be termed the missing link of the spiritistic hypothesis.

"2. It is a known and admitted characteristic of the intelligences that they attempt to personate deceased individuals. Indeed, so constantly does this characteristic display itself that it constitutes the chief difficulty in the way of satisfactory investigations. We meet with fraud and trickery on every side and with

the most heartless deception that the imagination can conceive. The most trusted "spirit friends or relations," sometimes after years of intercourse, and often on their own admission, turn out to be masquerading entities who have culled the information needed for the impersonation from the passive minds and memories of the experimenters, and who by some slip or some unusually bold manoeuvre in the end turn the tables against themselves.

THE SPIRIT INTELLIGENCE

"3. The moral character of the manifesting intelligence is invariably of a low order. This fact is and must be admitted by all unprejudiced inquirers who have an accurate knowledge of the subject and who have themselves observed and experimented for a sufficient length of time. In numerous instances, of course, this moral depravity is not immediately apparent --indeed it often remains hidden for years under a mass of platitudes and of high-sounding phrases, but it almost always discloses itself in the end. I know of instances which are appalling in character, and a recent publication of mine has placed material in my possession strongly confirming and illustrating the truth of this statement. A great ecclesiastic sent for me not long ago and told me instances which had been privately communicated to him and which had caused him such alarm that he was anxious to enter upon an active crusade against spiritistic practices and teachings....

SPIRITISM AND LUNACY

"4. As to the moral effects of these practices a big volume might be written, and even then the half would not have been told. I have in my possession communications from former spiritists which throw a lurid light upon the subject, and which suggest the gravest possible considerations. As far back as 1877 Dr. L. S. Forbes Winslow wrote on 'spiritualistic madness.' 'Ten thousand unfortunate people are at the present time confined in lunatic asylums on account of having tampered with the supernatural....I could quote many instances where men of the highest ability have, so to speak, neglected all and followed the doctrines of spiritualism only to end their days in a lunatic asylum.' And grave and weighty are the warnings more recently given by Professor Barrett, a former president of the Society for Psychical Research, and by Dr. Van Eeden, a Dutch physician, who has devoted much time and labor to the study of psychical phenomena. The latter tells us that in this unexplored region lie risks of error more serious than in any other department of science, and not merely of error, scientific and intellectual, but also of moral error. And it is this which seems to him

'to justify the orthodox religions in condemning the evocation of spirits as immoral, as infringing upon secrets hidden from man by the Eternal.'...

"5. The teaching imparted by the intelligences is wholly contradictory in character....There is unanimity on one point only and that is as regards the fundamental

R3744 : page 88

doctrines of Christian faith. It is as a medium, or seer, or human being of exceptional power and degree of development, that they seek to present Christ, and it is the subversion of faith in him as a divine person that the spirit messages ultimately aim at. The truth of this statement is fully established by the writings of the best of our modern spiritists. From personal letters which have reached me it is evident that the writer had in each single instance lost his faith in Christianity, and was suffering the keenest grief and disappointment in consequence.

AN ENEMY IN THE HOME

"It is for the reasons thus briefly stated that I cannot share the popular view respecting the interpretation of the phenomena of spiritism. On the contrary, I am thoroughly convinced that a terrible deception lurks behind these phenomena and that a grave and daily growing peril is menacing society. A dangerous and subtle enemy is silently creeping into our homes and families, and the astonishing thing is that our pastors and teachers are so strangely silent on the subject and are doing little or nothing to warn the people. I am personally strongly convinced that the policy of silence on the subject, so frequently adopted with a view to the avoidance of greater peril, is no longer a safe and a wise one.

"In my opinion our safeguard lies in taking every opportunity of conveying accurate information, and above all things stating all the facts of the case. It is the one-sided presentation of the subject and the scientific support which is being given to it that are doing all the mischief and that are hourly increasing the spread of evil.

"Let it once be clearly and fully known that these 'dear friends' on the other side of life ruin and desolate

R3744 : page 89

homes, that they drive men and women to destruction and to the madhouse, that they undermine religious faith and confidence, and that in a thousand instances they bring about an utter weariness and a detestation of the duties of the present life, and thinking men will abandon their intercourse with such beings and will seek for the interpretation of the problems elsewhere

than in scientific records."

=====

R3744 : page 89

ONE-DAY CONVENTION REPORTS.
CANTON, O. PITTSBURG, PA.

THE convention at Canton, O., was a decided success so far as human judgment could determine. Nearby towns were well represented--as many as twenty-three came from Cleveland. The morning text was, Mark 9:47,48. Many of you received the daily press report of that discourse. The afternoon session for the public was well attended. The Opera House was crowded--about 1500 persons gave close attention for two hours to our discourse on "To Hell and Back." The friends at Canton must have advertised extensively, for the day was not favorable for a large attendance.

The friends of the Allegheny Church thought that Pittsburgers should have a chance to hear on the subject. They secured Pittsburg Carnegie Hall and advertised liberally a meeting for Sunday evening, March 4, for the topic, "To Hell and Back." They did nobly, and on a stormy night packed the house with a most intelligent audience, which gave closest attention and in various ways indicated deep interest in what they heard. The official count of the attendance was 2,614. A number of friends were present from surrounding towns. The regular afternoon service was held in Bible House Chapel: the discourse of that occasion you have in the secular press.

THE CHESTNUT BURR.

"IN DUE TIME"

Behold, these burrs a story tell;
One closed, the other opened wide:
And should we heed the story well,
Great things to us it may betide.

We note with thorns that each is armed;
The one its secret will not broach.
The wise by this are fully warned,
Forbidding thus a close approach.

The other opened wide to view,
Discloses rich, sweet fruit within;
Yet once 'twas like the first one too,
And held its secret safe from men.

What wrought this change? Pray bring to light

Why one should yield its fruit so fair,
And one remain unopened quite,
Absorbing God's pure light and air?

Ah! There's the key, my brother true;
For when the Sun completes its task,
Its kernel then will come to view,
In God's own time. Who more can ask?

For God has times and seasons too,
And all shall be as He has said;
Tho' this is known to but the few,
Who to the world are "reckoned" dead.

Just as the burr so slowly grew,
Knowing the seasons in their round,
To God's appointed time was true,
Its open petals then were found;

Thus Truth shall yield her fruits to men,
When ripened in God's own fixed day;
Her portals firmly closed 'til then,
Nor yield to aught that men may say.

Shall we not profit then by this?
With patience wait 'til He reveals
His times and purposes to men,
Withdrawing that which now conceals?

But we are told in His own word,
The "wise" alone shall understand.
Then make us "wise," most gracious Lord,
To know what cometh from thy hand.
--A. J. MORRIS.

=====

R3744 : page 89

PUNISHING FELLOW-MEMBERS.

SOME of the dear brethren earnestly striving to conform their lives to the divine Word are noticing from the reading of MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. VI., more clearly than ever before the divine regulations respecting methods of procedure as set forth in Matthew 18:15. Some of them need to be reminded that it is not necessary for them to follow out all the regulations there set forth. If they choose to overlook the brother's fault it is their privilege; but if they cannot overlook the fault, if it continues to injure them, they may not speak of the matter to others but must follow the Lord's direction there given as the only method by which they can seek redress.

Some inquire respecting the kind of punishment to be meted out to those who are contumacious, who

will neither heed the private cry of the brother against impositions nor heed the counsel of two or three brothers nor heed the voice of the Church--what punishment should be applied to these, we are asked. Our reply is that we are not at liberty to punish our brother at all. The Lord proposes to do that; and tells us that at the present time we are not competent to judge the degree of each other's weakness according to the flesh, and consequently the degree of each other's responsibility as the Lord would justly measure it. It is ours to forgive, but not ours to punish; it is our privilege to seek to stop the injury which is being done us, but we may not execute any penalty on account of things of the past.

The whole lesson of the Lord's direction in Matthew 18:15 is to the effect that we are to strive thus to regain our brother's love, and to stop him from further injuring us. If we succeed in so doing in the same measure we regain him as our brother, we recover him. It is not the thought then that the brother should be brought before the Church to be punished, but merely that as a last resort he be brought before it for reproof, for correction, that he may see the error of his course

R3745 : page 90

and acknowledge it and cease to do wrong. The effort at every step should be to turn the brother to a right course, not to expose him, not to injure him, not to punish him, for the Lord has said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

The very most that the Church could do according to this Scripture would be that, after having vainly endeavored to get the brother to repent and reform, it should withdraw special brotherly fellowship from him until such time as he would express a willingness thereafter to do right. Then he should be received again.

Even treating the brother for a time as "a heathen man and a publican" would not mean to do him injury, to castigate him, to pillory him, to expose him to shame or contempt before the world. We are not permitted to do any of these things to heathen men or publicans. He may merely be treated in the meantime in the kindly, courteous way in which it would be proper for us to treat any publican or Gentile, withholding the special rights or privileges or greetings or voting opportunities that belong to the Church as a class separate from the world.

=====

R3745 : page 90

INFALLIBILITY AND CHURCH ELDERSHIP.

Question.--Brother Russell: I received not long

since a letter which set forth that you could not be considered infallible, because the writer alleges that you have changed your views respecting the propriety of the various gatherings of the Lord's people choosing from amongst their number Elders for the oversight of the Lord's work. The writer of the letter I mention was at one time, I believe, an elder in the St. Louis Church, but being no longer elected by the congregation he disfellowships them as "Babylonish." In the letter I mention he purports to give an extract from an old WATCH TOWER, which makes it appear that at that time you considered the election of Elders unnecessary. He then quotes from more recent WATCH TOWERS and from MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. VI., your words recommending the choosing of Elders and offering suggestions respecting the Scriptural qualifications of such.

My question is, Is this true? Have you changed your view on this subject, and if so may I ask, Why?

Answer.--First of all I hasten to assure you that I have never laid claim to infallibility. I do not expect to be infallible until by the Lord's grace I shall share a part in the First Resurrection; then, that which is perfect having come, that which is in part shall be done away; we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known.

We accept the writings by the twelve apostles as being so supervised of the Lord as to be free from any error. He himself said of the writers, the apostles, Whatsoever ye shall bind, enforce, on earth will be that which is recognized as bound or enforced in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose or release from on earth shall be loosed or released from in heaven. Hence we may regard the presentations of those twelve men, intended of the Lord to be his special representatives under the holy Spirit's dispensation, as being infallible, true, inerrant. But there is no ground for believing that any others than the apostles have been so miraculously holden by the power of God as were those twelve, or that we have any authority in the Word of God for considering the words and writings of others as being above or beyond testing and proving by the Scriptures. This has invariably been our presentation. It has been our endeavor to present the Word of God faithfully as he has given us to understand it--to our own Master we stand or fall. Nevertheless we trust that our course has the approval also of such of the Lord's dear people as, led by his Spirit, are now walking in the light of present truth.

OUR VIEW IS DIFFERENT

We do not deny growing in knowledge, and that we now see in a slightly different light the will of the Lord respecting Elders or leaders in the various little groups of his people. Our error in judgment was in expecting too much of the dear brethren who, coming early into the Truth, became the natural leaders of these little

companies. The ideal view of them which we fondly entertained was, that the knowledge of the Truth would have upon them a very humbling effect, causing them to appreciate their own insignificance, and that whatever they knew and were able to present to others was as mouthpieces of God and because used of him. Our ideal hopes were that these would in every sense of the word be examples to the flock; and that should the Lord's providence bring into the little company one or more equally competent, or more competent, to present the Truth, that the spirit of love would lead them in honor to prefer one another, and thus to help and urge one another to participation in the service of the Church, the body of Christ.

With this thought in mind we concluded that the larger measures of grace and truth now due and appreciated by the Lord's consecrated people would make it unnecessary for them to follow the course outlined by the apostles in the early Church. Our mistake was in failing to realize that the arrangements outlined by the apostles under divine supervision are superior to anything that others could formulate, and that the Church as a whole will need to have the regulations instituted by the apostles until, by our change in the resurrection, we shall all be made complete and perfect and be directly in association with the Master.

Our mistake gradually dawned upon us as we beheld amongst dear brethren to some extent the spirit of rivalry, and on the part of many a desire to hold the leadership of meetings as an office instead of as a service, and to exclude and hinder from developing as leaders other brethren of equal ability naturally and of equal knowledge of the Truth and competency in wielding the sword of the Spirit. From various little groups of the Lord's people I received kindly worded inquiries as to what should be done in the case of a brother who wished to lord it over God's heritage--who wished to run the Church as though he were infallible and as though the brethren generally were of inferior cast. We uniformly advised moderation, especially that the offending brother should be judged leniently, reminding the friends of the Apostle's intimation that prominence in a teaching capacity is especially dangerous, and that they should in correcting such a brother remember their own weaknesses and dangers in the same direction. But with no uncertain sound we assured them that in the divine order as well as in the rational order the entire congregation

R3745 : page 91

of the consecrated was to seek and to determine the will of the Lord respecting its leadership, and should not permit any man to usurp this function of the Church and to decide for it that he was the one and only choice of the Lord for the service.

We advised on the contrary that the very evidence

of a self-seeking spirit and desire to be greatest was an indication of unfitness for the position, and that to continue a "heady" one in leadership would not only be injurious to the congregation but injurious also to the leader, because we have the Scriptural assurance that God resisteth the proud, the self-seeking, and showeth his favors to the humble. And the Apostle's exhortation is, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time"--when the perfection of the new body in harmony with the new mind shall have fully taken the place of present imperfections of the flesh.

You have mentioned the St. Louis Church, and I recall that the little company there had difficulty on the score of leadership--and probably with the very writer of the letter you mention. He became offended with the whole company because he was not permitted to manage all the affairs of the Church. He wrote to me insisting that he knew that God had appointed him to that position, and intimating that the congregation had nothing whatever to do in the matter except to support him, and in supporting him to support the Lord and the Lord's will. He urged that he should not be elected, should not be voted for, but should be accepted by the congregation as of divine appointment. He wished me to urge this upon the congregation.

I demurred, and, in as gentle a manner as I could, pointed out to him that the voice of the Lord as respects our individual conduct is to be sought in our own minds through the aid of the Scriptures, and his voice in respect to the Church is to be sought through an expression of the sentiments of all the consecrated members, each seeking to express to the best of his or her ability the mind of the Spirit as secured from the Word.

The brother evidently felt hurt that I did not recognize his divine appointment, and now after several years the resentment, I presume, is showing itself through the letter you refer to, copies of which, I understand, have been sent to others as well as to you.

Such facts and experiences demonstrated to my mind not only the wisdom of the apostolic method in respect to "Elders in every city" (Titus 1:5) but also the necessity for such a course--that otherwise the Lord's people would not make the proper progress in knowledge and in the graces of the Spirit, nor come to fully appreciate the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, and the equality as brethren of one cast, one class, one company, one body, of all who are trusting in the precious blood of Christ and fully devoted to his service.

I am neither ashamed of the position I first took nor of my present position on this question. It does not surprise me that I did not grasp the full situation, that I did not make due allowance for the ambitions and selfishness which still pertain to the flesh of the friends even after the begetting of the Spirit and the setting of affections on things above and the endeavor to be governed

by the wisdom from above.

Without instituting a comparison as between myself or any one else at the present time as mouthpieces of the Lord and those twelve special mouthpieces so marvellously guided of the Lord at the beginning of

R3746 : page 91

this dispensation, I venture to call attention to the fact that even amongst the chiefest of those times was required to realize the mind of the Spirit on various subjects: for instance, the Apostle Peter needed a vision and subsequent experiences before he could learn the lessons that the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles had been broken down, so that now under the terms of this Gospel dispensation there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, who have any special prominence or preference in respect to the Lord's favors. Peter had a vision of one kind to show him the truth on that subject; I had a vision of another kind--a lesson of experience coming to me from the various little congregations of the Lord's people, which drove me to the apostolic method and convinced me that it is still necessary for the proper development and upbuilding and progress of the Church which is the body of Christ.

PRACTICALLY NO CHANGE

As I understand you, the brother's letter implies that the fact that the little churches choose their own leaders instead of the leaders choosing themselves proves that we have become sectarian, Babylonish. Well, it is difficult to tell how things will appear to those who begin to lose the spirit of the truth and who begin to go into darkness. As a matter of fact, we never did advocate that the Church should recognize a leader merely because he said he thought himself divinely appointed. Our thought was that the Lord's spirit prevailing amongst those possessing the Truth would so actuate them all that with one heart and one mind each would be glad to yield opportunities and render service to the others to the best of his ability, and that thus the Lord's will would be accomplished. The whole mistake was in expecting too much of fellow servants, neglecting to follow the apostolic method of selecting the latter by the "stretching forth of the hand," or using other means of ascertaining the opinion of the consecrated respecting the Lord's mind on the subject.

NO ORGANIZATION NOW

Those who declare that we have formed a sect or a denomination misrepresent the facts. A sect is a split off, and we split off from nothing. Our endeavor is to bring all of the people of God into heart-relationship and fellowship with the Lord and with each other.

We accept all as brothers who trust in the precious blood as their redemption price and who profess and evidence a full consecration to the Lord's service. We bar no one from Christian fellowship along these lines, whatever may be his theories on outside and less essential subjects.

We are not a denomination either, for we accept no name but that of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are Christians, no more and no less. We accept all names given to the Church in the Scriptures, not even taking one of them as a distinctive title as do our friends of the Christian denomination. Each individual has his relationship to the Lord, and because related to the Lord is related to all others similarly related, because the body of Christ is one. This, our union with the Lord, is the union of the Scriptures, and the only one: and so far as we know no other company of the Lord's people take this

R3746 : page 92

position in its entirety nor stand upon it fully. By the Lord's grace we hope to thus stand until he shall say "Well done!" and shall receive us into his glorious Kingdom.

THE TERM "BABYLONISH"

The word Babylonish, as we have frequently pointed out, signifies confusion. Not confusion as respects organization, for the various departments of Babylon, its various denominations, have very strict organizations that permit of no confusion whatever. Babylon's confusion is in her doctrines, which are unscriptural, confusing, contradictory, many of them erroneous. We fear that the brother whose letter you quote from is the one who is in danger of getting into a Babylonish condition--his ideas are certainly quite confused in respect to the question of Elders. In insisting that he and other Elders should rule the Church by divine appointment and without any human appointment he is getting to even a more extreme position than does the Pope of Rome, whom we think to be Babylonish enough; for even the Pope of Rome does not attain his position by a usurpation, but by an election by the Cardinals.

=====

R3746 : page 92

INTERNATIONAL S.S. LESSON REVIEW.

--MARCH 18.--

Golden Text:--"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all

manner of sickness."--Matt. 4:23.

=====

R3746 : page 92

A LESSON ON TEMPERANCE.

--PROVERBS 23:29-35.--MARCH 25.--

Golden Text:--"At last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."--v. 32.

THE Bible contains numerous cautions against intemperance, and declares that no drunkard shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. It follows that this must be a proper portion of the meat in due season. However, since probably only a very small minority of the "saints" are thus endangered, we need not give the subject great prominence in this journal. We do desire, however, to let all know that we are in sympathy with temperance in respect to intoxicants and "in all things."

We are in sympathy with the spirit of "total abstinence," too, though we cannot subscribe to all that is said and done and hoped for by its advocates. All true "saints" would surely be glad to forego their own liberty that thereby they might promote the general welfare and fulfil the advice of the Apostle, that--"We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Seeing the terrible injury being done by strong drink throughout the civilized world, surely every reader of this journal is now and always will be a temperance advocate--especially by example--while telling the "good tidings of great joy."

Among the many things for which the people of this land may well thank God is the temperance sentiment which prevails here as nowhere else in "Christendom." (Strange to say, "Christendom" is far behind Heathendom on this question.) Throughout all Europe the blight of intoxication is awfully prevalent. The statistics of Great Britain, France, Russia and Germany show conditions very much worse than prevail here.

Germany has long boasted that her people, even the children, drink wine and beer freely without injury; but changed conditions show changed results now. Mark the following report:

CHILDREN HABITUAL DRUNKARDS

TEMPERANCE WORKERS IN GERMANY FIND STARTLING CONDITIONS PREVAIL.

Berlin January, 6.--Friends of temperance reform in Germany have been collecting some startling statistics regarding

the habitual use of alcohol by school children in the Thuringian States, where their investigations were mainly pursued. They found in one class of forty-nine children of the average age of seven that thirty-eight of these regularly drank wine, forty regularly absorbed schnaps, and all of them drank beer. In the higher class of girls, twenty-seven out of twenty-eight regularly drank wine, fourteen schnaps and all beer. Of these twenty-one admitted that they had been more or less intoxicated on the occasion of weddings, birthdays, etc. In the town of Ortelsburg, in East Prussia, the condition of affairs is very bad. In one school fourteen children were found with brandy bottles in their pockets, which they had received from their parents. Boys nine years of age had to be sent home because they were drunk.

=====

R3746 : page 92

"TAKE HEED HOW YE HEAR."

--MATTHEW 7:15-29.--APRIL 1.--

"Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only."--Jas. 1:22

OUR lesson follows the Sermon on the Mount, and was evidently intended as a parable, to impress upon the minds of the Lord's people the importance of what they had heard--the importance of obeying as well as hearing the good tidings. It sets forth the good results of careful obedience, in contrast with the unsatisfactory results to those who would fail to obey. It is evidently not evil surmising if we are on the lookout for false teachers, who our Lord declared would come amongst his sheep to mislead them. Neither can it be evil speaking to call the attention of the sheep to such false teachers. The Master and the apostles foretold and forewarned against them and so should all who are faithfully following the Master's example.

R3747 : page 93

But we are to distinguish them in the manner which our Lord and the apostles clearly indicated: however smooth, polished, educated, gentle, they may be on the surface, we must get to know them better than by surface indications before we may dare trust them as leaders of the flock--we must become intimately acquainted with them, their motives, ambitions, private life. This our Lord intimates by telling us to beware of them if they are ravenous, greedy, selfish, even though outwardly they may have a sanctimonious air. The Apostle speaks of these, saying that "grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock": "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you": "even denying the Lord

that bought them."--Acts 20:29; 2 Pet. 2:1,3.

We are to balance the matter, however; and while vigilant to detect and resist the wolves in sheep's clothing, as well as out of it, we should remember our Lord's teachings on the other side of the question--that those who are not against us are on our part, and that we should neither reprove as wolves nor disown as brethren those whose hearts, whose characters, give evidence that they belong to the Lord, even though they follow not with us in respect to his service, the promulgation of his message, etc. In other words, we are to love all and wish God-speed to all loving the Lord and manifesting his Spirit, whether they associate with us or not. In a word, the divine rule is very broad and very narrow at the same time. It is narrow as respects discipleship and character: faith in the redeeming blood, consecration to the Master, and a manifestation of his Spirit are the lines of discipleship--broad within themselves, but narrow as compared to the lines of the world.

"KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS"

Anticipating our query respecting how we may know the true from the false our Lord says, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." He illustrates this by suggesting that grapes are not to be expected on thorn-bushes nor figs on thistles, although it is said that there is a thorn-bush in Palestine which grows a fruit somewhat resembling grapes, and a kind of thistle with heads shaped like figs. Nevertheless, no one was in danger of being deceived thereby, nor should any among the Lord's people be in doubt respecting the character and the fruitage of the life of those who are the followers of Christ.

The thought is that the Lord's true people are of such a kind that the fruit of their lives is nourishing and refreshing toward all who have fellowship with them. On the other hand there are persons who, thistle-like, are always scattering seeds that will cause trouble--false doctrines, evil surmisings and errors; and there are some who, like thorn-bushes, instead of bearing refreshing fruit, are continually reaching out to impede, to irritate, to annoy, to vex, to poison, to injure, those with whom they come in contact. The intimation clearly is that the Lord's people ought to have little difficulty in distinguishing between the false teachers who would mislead them and the under-shepherds who gladly lay down their lives in the service of the flock. The one class are continually mischief makers, underminers, destroyers. The other class are helpers, builders, strengtheners, peacemakers.

Not content with giving us a word-picture distinguishing between wolves and sheep, between injurious plants and fruitful ones, our Lord next institutes another illustration still more searching--contrasting a healthy fruit-tree with a diseased or evil one, contrasting a healthy Christian with a perverted and misguided one. He declares that a sound tree brings forth good fruit, but a corrupt or diseased tree brings forth undesirable, evil fruit. How we have all witnessed

this in nature--the sound apples come from good apple trees that are in healthy condition. The knotty, wormy, unsatisfactory fruit comes from trees that are diseased, under-nourished, uncared for, unpruned, attacked by worms, etc.

In this illustration our Lord seems to refer to the fact that those who are his disciples, sound and proper enough to begin with, might become evil, might lose their spiritual strength and fruitfulness--their carefulness. Lack of nourishment in the soil would expose a tree to disease, blight. So the Christian who would add to his attainment in knowledge is liable to decline in spirituality unless he have spiritual nourishment of the right kind. As without pruning the tree would develop suckers, which would corrupt it and ultimately destroy its fruitfulness, so the Christian needs the disciplines, the prunings, that he may develop in character and the graces of the Spirit. Our heavenly Father is the great husbandman and has promised us the proper care, yet it is not exactly with us as with the trees; for because of our higher endowment, our godlike quality of individuality, will, we are dealt with differently.

To a considerable degree it is for us to determine what nourishment we will have. The Lord supplies the good soil of Truth, the refreshing showers of grace, and the nourishment of precious promises, but it is for each of his people to use these and thereby to grow in grace, knowledge and love. We cannot, then, blame the Husbandman if we come short, and be unfruitful from lack of nourishment. None of his good promises can fail; whatever failing there may be must be in ourselves. Likewise with the pruning--the Lord will send the chastisements, trials, difficulties; but with our independent will it is possible for us to pass these by and, failing to use them, fail to correct the weaknesses, shortcomings and wrong developments of our nature. It is possible with us, notwithstanding all the development or pruning we may receive, to set our affections on houses, lands, or earthly aims, objects or individuals, which, like the suckers in the illustration, would draw away our vitality and hinder our bearing of acceptable fruit.

The sound tree cannot bear poor fruit, nor the corrupted or decayed tree bring forth good fruit. While each of the Lord's people is to examine himself before the mirror of God's Word, to ascertain his own character, disposition, likeness or unlikeness to divine standards, nevertheless, in this matter of deciding about fruit, whether it be good or bad, each of the Lord's people is called upon to exercise judgment in regard to others as well as to himself--what are the results, the fruitage, the token of my own life, and what is the fruitage, results, token of my brother, my neighbor. Our Lord's intimation is that these tests are specially applicable to those who would be leaders of his flock. They should all be examples, bearers of good fruit, and these good fruits should be looked for as a test of good, sound character--a character fully in harmony with the Lord. True, all are imperfect,

and with the best of intentions we cannot do all that we would, but the weakest of the Lord's brethren must bear some fruits that other brethren could discern, and these fruits should be accepted by the brethren according to the divine standard, viz., not of the flesh but of the spirit, the will, the intention. So, then, every true child of God should manifest before the brethren and before the world honesty, faithfulness of intention, a consecrated heart, mind, will, which would seek in all things to do the will of the Father in heaven.

In Palestine, to this day, fruit trees are taxed, and hence a tree which will not bear, whose fruitage is poor, cannot be tolerated, for it would entail a loss instead of a revenue. Similarly, the assurance that the Lord will ultimately cast away every unfruitful one--"every branch in the vine that beareth not fruit he taketh away"--while every branch that beareth fruit is purged, that it may bring forth more fruit, is a further lesson along the same line.

Our Lord used a fig-tree to represent the Jewish nation, and pointed out that it was not bringing forth the desired fruitage, and that therefore it would be cut down and destroyed. The symbolical "fire" which utterly destroyed the Jewish nation made an end of their tree. The Jews will indeed receive a further blessing at the hand of the Lord, but, as he declares through the prophet, it will be "not by your Covenant." The blessing to come to Israel and all the nations in the future will be the New Covenant. Similarly, in the end of this Gospel age, not only will there be an individual test of the Lord's people as respects good and bad fruit, but Christendom as a whole, as a system, will be found unfruitful, unsatisfactory; and when the true saints of the Lord shall have been gathered out and glorified, the tree, the system as a whole, will go down, in the great time of trouble with which this age shall close and the new dispensation begin. Christendom will indeed be favored and blessed under the New Covenant of the Millennial age, but its special privileges and opportunities of the present time under the Abrahamic Covenant will be forever gone.

"I NEVER KNEW YOU"

Continuing his discourse, our Lord implies eventually a great number of nominal followers devoid of his Spirit, not bringing forth the fruitage that he desires, not members of his called and chosen and faithful class, though outwardly, nominally, all of these. Of this class he says there shall be many. He points down to our day, saying, "in that day"--in the closing of this age, in the testing time, in the time when he shall come to make up his jewels and to glorify them as his Bride, his members, his associates in the Kingdom. Many at that time--in our day--will profess that they know the Lord, that they are prophesiers or teachers, that they are casting out devils, opposing sin and multitudinous forms of evil, and that they are carrying on mighty works, benevolent institutions, colleges, seminaries, etc., in

his name. The Revised Version gives, "by thy name," intimating

R3748 : page 94

that the name of Christ is used rather as a charm, to conjure by.

How true is this picture to the conditions of our day! How many take the Lord's name in vain, associating it with their enterprises, which are often in direct conflict with the Master's Word and Spirit. Why do they use his name? Simply as a talisman to conjure by, to increase their influence, to satisfy their own minds, to make themselves believe that in doing their own wills they are working the will of God. How true this is in respect to nearly all religious institutions of our day! Take the churches, for instance, recognizing more or less clearly the divine opposition to their sectarian spirit and creeds and methods and organizations--they, nevertheless, are not satisfied unless they somehow connect the name of Christ with their institutions and arrangements.

But the testing time is near--the Lord will inquire respecting the fruit of these systems; he will not be deceived; yea, he will expose the bad fruit, that all may see that his judgment is just. It will be manifest that neglect of his Word has led to degeneracy, decay--that the suckers of worldly ambition, pride, wealth, show, etc., have been cultivated, notwithstanding all of the trying experiences which might have served to prune these. It will be shown that many of the prophets of Babylon are false prophets, whose teachings have misguided the people and, instead of blessing, have done injury, instead of enlightening have blinded. It will be manifested that many of them are ravening wolves in sheep's clothing, hungry with ambition for fame and prominence and honor of men, and willing to barter the interests of the flock for their personal aggrandizement. It will be shown that much of this conjuring in the name of Jesus has been merely a cloak under which, deceiving and being deceived, sectarian fruitage, and not the love, joy, peace and holy Spirit, have been cultivated. The day will declare it, will show it, will manifest it. The whole world shall be witness eventually that God's name was proven a dishonor, and his Word misrepresented, because false teachers were looking every one to gain from his own quarter--his own denomination.--Isa. 56:11.

The Lord never knew the sects--he never recognized them, he never authorized them; they are of men, and for men, not of the Lord nor for the Lord's glory. Claiming that all there is of Christianity is due to themselves, they are proud and boastful and realize not that the Lord's true cause would have flourished far better without them in the simplicity of the early Church, one in redemption through the precious blood and in consecration to the Redeemer. The gathering out of the Bride class and the leaving of the remainder will be saying in effect, "I never knew you, never recognized you, never authorized you;" and these unauthorized sects will go down in the great time of trouble. We are glad,

however, that the thousands and millions who have been deceived by these false systems will have a glorious opportunity during the Millennial age to come to a knowledge of the Truth and a right understanding of the character of God as revealed in the fulfilment of his gracious plan. Thus many who miss the great prize may still have a glorious opportunity for the lesser prize or favor of God in restitution, etc.

"DEPART FROM ME, YE THAT WORK INIQUITY"

We believe that there are active workers in the sectarian systems called "Babylon" who will yet be reached by the knowledge of the Truth and delivered. Our Lord intimates this, saying, "Come out of her, my people." Some of his people evidently are in Babylon, and it is our present

R3748 : page 95

mission in the name of the Lord to call these out--through the presentation of the Present Truth, which will show to all who are truly the Lord's where they stand, and their duty. Others of the active workers in the iniquitous systems, which are counterfeits of the true, misrepresenters of God's message and binders and enslavers of the Lord's people, because not at heart loyal to him, will not come out of Babylon, and therefore will share in the condemnation coming upon her. They will go into the great time of trouble, and for a season at least be cut off from all fellowship with the Lord. These workers of iniquity will have their hands full of the trouble which they have helped to bring upon the world of mankind by their misrepresentations of the divine character and plan. It will be a terrible chastisement, and our hope for them is that "when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth all the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." --Isa. 26:9.

ON THE ROCK OR ON THE SAND

This picture or parable of one house built upon the rock and the other house built upon the sand refers not to the Church and the world, but to two parties in the Church. None are in the parable except "those who hear these sayings of mine." The world hears not our Lord's message at all. As the Apostle declares, the world is both deaf and blind to spiritual things. Those who hearken to and appreciate the Lord's sayings represent at least a nominal Church, and amongst those of the nominal Church are some who are obedient to the Lord's Word while others are disobedient. The obedient are built upon the rock, the disobedient upon the sand.

Those who build upon the rock our Lord explains to be such as not only hear his message but are obedient thereto to the extent of their ability. Let us remember the words to which he refers--they are the words or message of the Sermon on the Mount, which show the things which are blessed

of God in contradistinction to the things which would not have his approval. Those who do, who strive for, who to the best of their ability obey these divine teachings, the message from heaven, are laying the foundations which will be permanent, which will guarantee them against all the storms, difficulties and trials of the present life.

Those who hear the Master's words and say, "Yea, Lord," but who do not put the Master's teachings into practice, are not built properly upon the rock of Truth, upon Christ. They are building their hope, their faith, their trust upon a foundation which will not stand. When the adversities of life come upon such their hopes will be undermined, their faith will collapse. Thus does the Lord teach us that it is not merely to know his will, to be doctrinally informed, but that he is looking for such character development in us as will bring us into full harmony with his teachings, into heart harmony, and, to the extent that we are able, to obedience in all the affairs of life. The other, whose faith is built upon knowledge without obedience, without growth in grace, will not be accepted to the Kingdom, will not be members of the Bride class, will not be joint-heirs with God's dear Son.

"THE FIRE OF THAT DAY"

In this lesson our Lord describes not only the trials and tests which come upon all Christians throughout this Gospel age, but especially the great test in the close of this age--in the "harvest" time. Here his figure is that of rain, floods, and winds beating upon the faith structure of his professed followers, overthrowing the faith of those not properly constructed in accordance with his teachings, but unable to harm those founded on the rock of Truth. A mighty downpour of Truth throughout Christendom is in progress. The great storm is already raging. The various denominations are trembling under the shock. Their foundations on human tradition, creeds, theories, ignorance, superstition of the "dark ages," are realized to be unsatisfactory. Ere long the storms of Truth will move the quicksand foundation upon which nominal Christendom is built, and her wreck will follow. Only the true people of God will be able to stand the great storm of "that day"--already beginning.

This is the same storm and flood mentioned by the Lord through the prophet Isaiah--"The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding places...when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye be overthrown by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass through, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report [the message, the Truth]."--Isa. 28:17-19.

The same day of trial is pictured under another figure by the Apostle Paul when he says, "The fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." He pictures true believers built upon the rock, the true foundation, but points out to us the necessity of having a proper house, or

faith, as well as a proper foundation. He pictures one faith structure built of wood, hay, stubble, combustible materials, which will shortly be destroyed in this day when the fire of divine judgment shall test every doctrine and destroy every error. He pictures also the proper building constructed of gold, silver and precious stones, the divine promises, and how these will stand every test.

The lesson as a whole is, first, that we must be on the rock foundation to have either part or lot in the matter--to be able to stand any test; second, that of those upon the rock, trusting in Christ, loyal to him and his atonement work, there will be two classes--the "little flock," faithful to the Word and upheld by it and protected, and the "great company," not sufficiently diligent and careful respecting the divine promises, and who will have a faith structure largely composed of error, which will be consumed. Respecting this latter class the Apostle declares, "the same shall be saved, yet so as by fire." This fitly describes the deliverance of the great company, who will "come up through great tribulation and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb."--1 Cor. 3:12,15; Rev. 7:14.

R3749 : page 95

"DOERS OF THE WORD"

Our golden text is well chosen--"Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only." To be honored with a knowledge of the divine will and plan is a great boon, a great blessing; but it brings a great responsibility: "to whom much is given of him shall much be required." We who have heard the voice of him that speaketh from heaven, speaking peace through Jesus Christ; we who, on the strength of this message of forgiveness of sins, have been accepted in consecration as members of the body of Christ, we have greater responsibility than have others. To attain the glorious things to which we have been invited we must not merely have this honor but must make use of the privilege and show our appreciation by obedience to the terms of the Covenant --presenting our bodies as living sacrifices to the divine service, in faithful obedience to righteousness, and in endeavoring to assist others in the same course.

=====