

SEMI-MONTHLY
VOL. XXVII. MAY 1, 1906 No. 9

CONTENTS.

Views from the Watch Tower.....131
 The New Psychology.....131
 Spiritual Unrest.....131
 The Memorial Celebration.....132
 The Convention at Akron, O.....135
 Pilgrim Requests Yearly.....135
 Neither Male Nor Female in Christ Jesus.....135
 Berean Bible Study for May--Evil Speaking and
 Evil Surmising.....137
 The Sowing and the Reaping.....137
 "Clothed and in His Right Mind".....140
 A Timely Warning to the Classes.....143
 London, Eng., Convention.....144
 Reading Six Dawns in One Year.....130

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.

=====

R3766 : page 130

READING SIX DAWNS IN ONE YEAR.

A sister recently wrote us that herself and daughter had begun the year with the resolution to read at least eight pages of the DAWNS each day, and remarked that by so doing they expected to reread the entire six volumes during the year 1906. The statement astonished us and we figured it out and sure enough the 3000 pages of the DAWNS can all be read in one year at the rate of eight pages per day. Even beginning now at twelve pages per day the entire six volumes could be mastered during 1906.

It is wonderful what a blessing there is in watching the minutes--how much can be accomplished by system. We know of nothing so likely to be helpful to our WATCH TOWER readers as a fresh study yearly of the entire DAWN series. Besides, those who reread most assure us that they get an increase of blessing with each reading, and an increase of knowledge, too, because as their minds expand they are able to grasp more surely the depths of the divine plan. It is our experience that those who keep up their study of the DAWNS are not only the most thoroughly furnished in respect to the armor of God and the use of the Sword of the Spirit, but that they are thus kept by the power of God from snares of error which entangle others. And thus they are qualified to instruct others.

=====

R3766 : page 131

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY.

BY PROF. EDGAR L. LARKIN.

The discoveries now being made in the great psychological laboratories of the world are of the highest possible interest. The leading psychologists now assert that the only difference between the minds of the lower animals and man is merely one of degree only. That is, the minds of men are of the same kind as those of all other animals, only many times stronger.

Careful and long-continued experiments have demonstrated that even low types of animals have reason that differs only from that in man in degree.

All organic beings are mere colonies of cells--i.e., cities of individual living entities. At present it is unknown what life is, but each cell is a center or source

of life. Ganglia are nodes or collections of cells into smaller communities; and in the human brain different combinations of the same kinds of cells may produce different faculties of mind. For differing associations of the same kind of ultimate corpuscles--there is but one kind--give rise to all the phases revealed by ordinary chemistry, and by the spectroscope. The universe is made up of varying combines of life corpuscles into infinite diversity; and variations in thought, from late analysis of mind and brain, seem to be caused by varying clusters together of one kind of brain cells into ganglia.

Mind is now known to be a product of brain activity --that is, mind is a result. Mice, birds, insects have been shown to be possessed of reason. Animals learn by experience and store this experience in memory for long periods of time. Love, affection, veneration, love of the beautiful, gratitude, conscience, consideration, contrition, sorrow, trouble, care, mercy, pity and many other attributes for long deemed to be human only are now known to be possessed by animals, in many cases to a high degree.

Several books giving thousands of instances are published. The most rigid scrutiny made by careful and conservative scientific psychologists during the last twenty years has been totally unable to detect any trace in body or brain or find any analogy in nature concerning the existence of what is popularly called the soul. Blood cells build flesh, stomach cells digest and brain cells evolve mind. Psychologists are incapable of finding any difference between the three processes. In the present state of psychic science it is not known what mind is, but whatever it may be it is known that it is caused by the action of brain and nerve cells. When this activity ends all traces of mind come to an end. Cells that originate mind are far more complex than those that perform the office of secretion in glands. The secretion of mind is of greater complexity than the secretion of bile or gastric fluids. But all are developed by the work of cells.

Perhaps the world is now ready to receive this generalization, thus: The human mind contains no faculty that cannot be found in the minds of animals, in less degree.--"New York Journal."

* * *

Thus science is concluding with the Bible that man is "of the earth, earthly"--not a spirit being but "a little lower than the angels";--an animal soul in the image of God. As the head of all earthly creatures his faculties are on a far higher plane than theirs. Hence his joys and his sorrows, his pains and his pleasures are more intense.

SPIRITUAL UNREST--THE WORLD'S VIEW

"The signs of spiritual unrest abroad in the land multiply daily.

"The enlightenment of the age is dissatisfied with dogmas which were accepted without reservation a generation ago and wants the creeds amended to conform to the liberal spirit of today.

"The Episcopal Church sees in higher criticism a way to meet this demand. In brief, this criticism is to harmonize the contradictions in the Bible, to expunge miracles which have dubious claim to the supernatural and to retain those which are supported by reason and the strongest proofs.

"Presbyterianism is gradually dismissing doctrines

R3766 : page 132

long held sacred, the most repugnant of which is predestination, which is abhorrent to the rising generation of the communion, and is otherwise setting itself abreast of modern thought.

"Methodism is relaxing its devotion to beliefs long dear to its heart. The latest evidence of this is that its oldest and most conservative university, Depauw, at Greencastle, Ind., has ordered the study of the Bible to be optional where heretofore it has been obligatory. No denomination has exceeded the Methodist in devotion to the good book or been more insistent upon its reading wherever possible. This departure has awakened widespread attention and proves that in the most orthodox of denominations unrest is at work upsetting long-cherished doctrines.

"The Baptists find their adherence to close communion prevents the Church from allying with itself a large following who are not members and who believe the sacraments should be open to them by virtue of attendance upon and belief in the Church, and, further, in aiding in its maintenance.

"The Lutherans, like the Catholics, are so satisfied with ceremonials that the agitation for a modern interpretation of Scriptural pronouncements has made only slight headway.

"Even intellectual churchmen look upon evangelical adherence to revelation as being the great and primary cause of backsliding and of swelling the millions outside of pulpit influence. They believe its most repellant doctrine, that of endless punishment after death, is the largest contributory cause in driving people toward infidelity and in fortifying the position of those who have long defied the invitation to come into the Church.

"Higher criticism has a large clerical following, strange as it may seem. The men who have studied the subject more than any other class, who are actuated

by the highest motives, believe that the time is at hand when something must be done to check the growth of unbelief, to present doctrines which can be conscientiously accepted by the enlightened and which in turn will prevent thousands from lapsing into indifferentism or worse--the complete rejection of the message from on high."--"Utica Press."

=====

R3767 : page 132

THE MEMORIAL CELEBRATION

ANOTHER celebration of the Memorial of our dear Redeemer's death has come and gone;--one less intervenes between the full end of the sufferings of the Christ and the glory which shall surely follow. Each one in its turn seems more precious than the former ones as we grow yearly in grace and in the knowledge of all that the Memorial signifies,--of the great ransom for all, our dear Redeemer's sacrifice, and of our wonderful privilege of being accepted as his "members" to share his cross and ignominy now and by and by to share his glory, honor and immortality.

The gathering at Allegheny was one of the most enjoyable we have ever held, and by far the largest. The company was estimated at 800, nearly all of whom partook of the symbolical body and blood of Christ, a conservative estimate being 750. At a preceding meeting twenty-three adults symbolized their consecration unto death by water-immersion. The discourse preceding and introducing the "Supper" set forth the meaning of the institution, tracing it back to the original Passover of the first-born of Israel in Egypt down to the antitype Christ and his members or body, "the Church of the First-born." We saw that as only the first born of Israel were in danger in the type, so only the Church of the First-born are now in danger as respects the Second Death,--though all must later be tried for life everlasting or death everlasting.

As we broke the unleavened bread we remembered our Lord's words, "This is my body." We discerned that he meant, This represents or symbolizes my body, --that he could not have meant that the bread had been turned into flesh, because he had not yet been crucified, but still had his body of flesh. We partook of the symbol, meditating in our hearts that only by reason of our Lord's sacrifice could we be justified from sin-and-death condemnation. By faith we appropriated our Lord's pure manhood, sacrificed for us and for all.

Then we took the further view brought to our attention by the Apostle Paul (I Cor. 10:16,17), that the consecrated members of Christ are reckoned in with him as members of one greater loaf, which is being broken throughout this Gospel age, and will be the bread

of life of which the whole world will partake during the Millennium if they would have everlasting life.

We partook of the "fruit of the vine" as a remembrance of our Lord's cup of self-sacrifice and of our pledge to share it with him. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ?" He is the vine, we are the branches, and every branch must bear the fruit of sacrifice. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." We who hope for immortality by a share in "his resurrection," we who hope thus to have inherent life, life in ourselves, do well to remember that our Lord has specifically stated the terms to be that we must drink of his cup, his blood (consecration), as well as eat of his flesh (justification).

We again reminded the dear flock that this season of the year seems to be one of peculiar testing; and that this will probably be increasingly the case as we near the final Memorial on this side the veil. We reminded them that noble Peter almost fell at the same time that the ignoble Judas sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver. We reminded all of the Master's words, which, if heeded, would have spared Peter so severe a test--"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation!"

The fiery trial is necessary for the separating of the gold of the New Creature from the dross of the old creature. The "wheat" must not only be separated from the "tares," but then it must be threshed and winnowed ere it

R3767 : page 133

is fit for the garner. All of our experiences in connection with these harvest siftings accord with the Apostle's words: "Grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock [self-seeking ones who never were true sheep], and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after themselves."--Acts 20:29,30.

The safe course is to watch and pray, lest we be ensnared by the Adversary either by old or new methods. If our hearts be full of loyalty to the Lord it will hinder "man-worship" of every form, including idolatry of self. If additionally we are "filled with the spirit" of meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness--Love--it will prevent barrenness and unfruitfulness, and drive out every vestige of anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, and all other works of the flesh and the devil. Thus doing, dearly beloved, very soon the Chief Shepherd will grant us an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom.

GENERAL REPORTS FAVORABLE

As we write (April 24) we have before us reports from 337 Memorial celebrations on April 8th. Quite well indeed--improving in promptness every year. Ten

of these reports are from Great Britain. The numbers in attendance ranged from two up to the largest number, which met at Allegheny. The average of all was 20 plus: the total reported is 6,267. Although this total is far beyond that of any previous celebration it leaves much to be desired. We are now issuing 30,000 copies of the WATCH TOWER twice a month, and two readers to each would show 60,000 earnest Bible students. Of that number, surely many more should feel a deep interest in celebrating their Redeemer's death in harmony with his injunction. We hope to hear from a much larger number next year.

We here give the names of the gatherings reporting 20 and over participating:

New Brighton, Pa., 20; Carbondale, Pa., 20; Johnstown, Pa., 21; St. Petersburg, Fla., 21; Olive Branch, La., 22; W. Medford, Mass., 22; Springfield, Mass., 23; Canton, O., 23; Worcester, Mass., 23; Milwaukee, Wis., 23; Danbury, O., 23; Omaha, Neb., 24; Tampa, Fla., 24; Pasadena, Calif., 24; Newark, N.J., 25; Tiffin, O., 25; Cohoes, N.Y., 25; Atlanta, Ga., 25; Cedar Rapids, Ia., 25; Schenectady, N.Y., 25; Dallas, Tex., 25; Reedy, Va., 26; Hayne, N.C., 27; Youngstown, O., 27; San Antonio, Tex., 27; Richmond, Va., 30; Wheeling, W.Va., 30; Decatur, Ills., 34; Louisville, Ky., 35; San Francisco, Calif., 35; Binghamton, N.Y., 36; Buffalo, N.Y., 37; Lynn, Mass., 39; Altoona, Pa., 40; Dayton, O., 43; Kansas City, Kan., 44; Valdosta, Ga., 45; St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., 49; Toledo, O., 55; Scranton, Pa., 56; Providence, R.I., 58; Cincinnati, O., 58; Toronto, Canada, 61; Columbus, O., 74; Indianapolis, Ind., 78; St. Louis, Mo., 88; Cleveland, O., 99; Washington, D.C., 103; Philadelphia, Pa., 108; New York, N.Y., 140; Los Angeles, Calif., 155; Chicago, Ills., 170; Boston, Mass., 176; Allegheny, Pa., 750.

In Great Britain: Leeds, 22; Seven Oaks, 30; Bristol, 32; Luton, 39; Manchester, 80; Liverpool, 148; Glasgow, 153; London, 248.

In Germany: Barmen-Elberfeld, 90; Wanne, 40.

page 133

A FEW INTERESTING REPORTS FROM ELSEWHERE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

In Philadelphia last evening 108 partook of the emblems of bread and wine in memoriam of our Lord's death. We rejoiced in our justification and renewed our consecration to be broken with Him and partake of His sufferings. We had a blessed time. The evening previous, eleven--five brothers and six sisters--symbolized their consecration by water baptism.

With Christian love, E. D., Philadelphia, Pa.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:--

For the Church at Brantford, I have the pleasure to inform you that 16 souls met last night to memorialize with bread and wine our Lord's death for us and our death with him, the meeting being conducted as nearly in the prescribed order as we were able. May God so bless this feast for us that we may be strengthened in the great race.

The meeting was led by Brother A _____ S _____, who gave us a very good discourse on the Memorial Supper, showing clearly how, why and when it was instituted and who can partake of it without condemnation.

We think that this anniversary of our Lord's death has been the most precious of any that we have yet observed, because the spirit of love has been growing among us during this last year. It seems that all of the little company here have been drawn closer together lately than ever before.

In our prayers we counted it a privilege to remember the joint-sacrificers who were everywhere participating in the same service. All join me in love to you and the other beloved members at Allegheny.

L. W., Brantford, Ont.

R3768 : page 133

DEAR FRIENDS:--

In accordance with the suggestion in the WATCH TOWER I send you a report of the Memorial gathering of the little company at New Bedford last evening. Every one present seemed to appreciate the meaning of the Memorial perhaps as never before. The article in WATCH TOWER of April 1 was read, giving all a clear idea of the Supper as instituted by the Savior. An unusual feature of the meeting was the presence with us of seven Portuguese brothers and sisters, with their leader, one of our number, who read I Cor. 11:20-29 in his own language and offered prayer, after which they "sang a hymn." Not one of our company could understand a word, but it was inspiring and uplifting, giving us the happy thought that our Father understands all languages and we are all one in him.

Eighteen were present. All send greetings to the Allegheny Church. With love,

M. B., Massachusetts.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

The Memorial was observed by four of the brethren at the Penitentiary last Sunday evening. We are all rejoicing that we had the opportunity to meet together and again renew our pledges to the Lord. We feel that it is a wonderful privilege that we should be permitted to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.

The recurrence of the Memorial season is attended with great blessings to each one, as it strengthens us to meet the trials and testings which are necessary for the developing of our character, joyfully. I ask an interest

R3768 : page 134

in your prayers that we continue faithful in the narrow way until the end.

I remain, your brother in Christ,
G. E., Columbus, O.

page 134

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

The friends of St. Paul and Minneapolis met this evening together in celebration of the Memorial. To me, and I believe to all of the friends, this was a solemn occasion. Our simple service was a reminder of the first one conducted by our Lord the last night of his human existence. We felt near to him, felt keenly our own personal unworthiness to partake of his sufferings, and a realization of his exalted worthiness which he has so freely applied on our behalf. Praise be to God for such a Savior!

There were 43 present, while the emblems were sent to six, three brothers and three sisters, who were unable to attend on account of sickness.

In the forenoon a meeting was held, when a lesson on baptism was given, after which eight--three brothers and five sisters--symbolized their consecration unto death by immersion into water. It gave us all joy to witness this.

Mention was made to the Lord in your behalf, that he would continue to bless you in his service and bear you over every trial to the end. We feel so thankful for the Truth and for the continual "meat in due season" which the Lord is sending us through you.

And now, with much Christian love, I am, yours faithfully in Christ, J. H., St. Paul, Minn.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Last evening the Cleveland Church held the meeting in commemoration of the Lord's death. The event this year was very impressive and will long be remembered by all present. As Brother K_____ explained the significance of the emblems our hearts were filled with thankfulness to our dear Redeemer for this great sacrifice on our behalf. Though the occasion was a sad one as we thought of the ignominy and shame our Lord passed through, yet we rejoiced that he has gained the victory and is exalted to a glorious position. There

were 99 participators, and we realized our Lord's sweet presence with us as we partook of the emblems which represented his broken body and shed blood. We remembered you all, as well as the little classes of like precious faith everywhere and we felt we were remembered by you all.

A baptism service preceded the meeting, at which nine were symbolically immersed in water, thereby showing the immersion of the heart into the will of Christ. It was a solemn and affecting service, not for them alone, but for the rest of us who had already consecrated our lives and laid our little all at the Master's feet. Oh, may we all prove faithful and rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer for his sake, and by his grace may we reach the goal and receive the "Well done, good and faithful servant."

May the Lord's richest blessing abide with you and those who colabor with you in the grand harvest work.

Yours with Christian love, M. S., Cleveland, O.

DEAR BROTHER:--

One hundred and forty-nine souls assembled here to partake of the symbols of the shed blood and broken body of our Lord and Redeemer, besides which number six, who were unable to leave their homes, were served there. It was indeed a solemn and blessed time and few eyes were dry as Bro. G_____ called attention to the meaning of the symbols and what was implied as we partook. It was an additionally solemn thought as we noted that some who were with us last year had passed to their reward, and that another season would find others missing from earthly scenes. Prayers of fervency were offered for every member of the one body wherever it might be; also thanksgiving for the privileges of the present time.

May the dear Lord continue to use you in ministering to the household of faith is our earnest prayer.

Yours in the one hope,

F. S., Los Angeles, Calif.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

It rejoices my heart to make the following report: There were two impressive services held under the auspices of the Scranton class to commemorate our blessed Lord's sufferings and death; the one in Carbondale, being served by Scranton elders, for the first time enjoyed this glorious privilege of meeting on an occasion like this. With 20 present Brother G_____ appropriately called attention to the real meaning of the celebration. The other in Scranton, with 56 present, was conducted by Brother W_____, who fittingly led the thought along those lines which should bring out and forcibly impress

the heart with the deep meaning of those events of Christ's life coming down to us over a period of 1873 years.

The number present in Scranton has doubled since 1900, and, together with the Carbondale gathering, gives the encouraging total of 76.

Very sincerely your brother in Christ,
J. H., Scranton, Pa.

FROM THE GERMAN BRANCH

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

With thankfulness toward God and our Lord Jesus Christ I make this little report of the Memorial celebration in Barmen-Elberfeld. There were over 90 who partook of the emblems this year, as against 64 last year. In the afternoon preceding ten of the friends were immersed in symbol into Christ's death. We may hope that many if not all hearts went out in worship in spirit and in truth toward the living and true God and our Savior. It is with much pleasure we notice this growth of interest, and our constant prayer is that the Lord might finish the work of faith and grace with power from on high, seeing it is God who giveth the increase. May this Memorial give us new strength for another year, or less, if it should be "unto the end" of our race.

Brother Kunkel served the friends in Wanne, quite recently interested in Present Truth. About 40 partook of the emblems there, which was a great surprise, for it is only a year since the interest began to take root and to spread, through the energies of a brother who himself had become interested through finding a Volunteer TOWER in which some coal miner had brought a lunch.

Your brother and servant in Christ,
O. A. KOETITZ,--Germany.

=====

R3767 : page 135

THE CONVENTION AT AKRON, O.

THE Convention at Akron, Ohio, on April 15 was a joyful occasion for many of us. The Cleveland class chartered an electric car, and were present to the number of 77, with faces beaming with the light of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. Others were from other nearby places. The Akron class of about 15 was thus encouraged by the presence of about 200 brethren from outside.

A Testimony Meeting came first. Many told briefly of their joy in the Lord since coming to an intelligent

understanding of the Scriptures. Just at the close of the meeting a man arose who said: "I want to thank God for the blessing that has come through MILLENNIAL DAWN to myself and others who are striving to live manly lives, decent lives, clean lives from the world's standpoint." Educated for the ministry and for a time a preacher, he had lapsed into infidelity and irreligion for some years. He became a book-binder and noticing the quantities of DAWNS passing through the bindery he read some from curiosity. The first two chapters of Volume VI., he declared, lifted him out of infidelity by giving him fresh confidence in the Bible. This led to his study and acceptance of all the DAWN teachings--except that he had never consecrated his life to the Lord. He was glad to testify that what he had learned gave him higher aspirations toward a manly life.

The Testimony meeting was followed by a discourse on the Resurrection (the first of a series of seven) which many of you have read in the public prints, and to which we need not here refer more particularly. The Akron friends very generously had an excellent luncheon provided, which was heartily relished by about 125 of us.

The afternoon public meeting was held in Music Hall. The friends had evidently done their advertising, etc., "as unto the Lord," and had done it well; for there was an immense crowd for a place of the size. The hall is said to seat 1430, and about 170 stood throughout, while about 100 could not get admittance because there was not even standing room for them. The Lord granted us great liberty in proclaiming his plan of salvation for our sin-cursed race, and the audience gave profound attention. We trust that some were helped nearer to the Lord in faith and obedience. After this service the bookbinder mentioned foregoing came forward saying that the love of God constrained him, and that he had given his little all to the Lord--henceforth, forever.

=====

page 135

YEARLY REQUESTS FOR PILGRIM VISITS.

OUR "Pilgrim" service is becoming a very important factor in the "Harvest" work. While the brethren chosen for this service are not sent forth as perfect, the Society considers them worthy brethren everyway--ensamples to the flock in doctrine and practice. They travel continuously, as per announcements on the last page of the TOWER. All of their expenses, of every kind, are met by the Society: they do not solicit money or anything else, either for themselves or the Society. The service is free--the expenses being borne by the contributors to the Tract

Fund. We seek divine guidance as to who shall be engaged in this service and where it shall be rendered. With the means put at our disposal we seek to do our best for the general welfare of the Lord's cause.

The routine of the Pilgrims is in circuits arranged in harmony with the interest shown and requests received; and since many changes occur during a year we desire that REQUESTS FOR PILGRIM VISITS be made yearly, in May. Please answer the following questions, or as many of them as apply in your case. These responses are filed for our information for twelve months. You need not repeat the questions, but merely indicate them thus: (a), (b), etc. A postal card will serve our every purpose and be easy to file away. All interested classes please attend to this matter at once.

- (a) How many "Bible Students" reside in your vicinity?
- (b) Are weekly meetings held by you?
- (c) How many are usually in attendance?
- (d) Where do you now meet?
- (e) At what hours are the Sunday studies held?
- (f) Was a vote taken on the "Pilgrim" invitation?
- (g) How many voted for the invitation to be sent?
- (h) How many, if any, voted against the invitation?
- (i) Would a suitable place be found for a public meeting?
- (j) What attendance do you think could be secured for the public session by such notification and advertising as your class would give?
- (k) Would a suitable place be found for semi-private meetings for the interested?
- (l) Have the members of your class chosen leaders in accord with DAWN Vol. VI., chapters 5 and 6? If so, give names and full addresses of the two to whom notification of a Pilgrim coming should be sent, and please notify us of any changes.
- (m) Give full name and address of the one who has volunteered to entertain the Pilgrim.
- (n) If your town is not on a railroad give name of proper railroad station to stop at and tell how Pilgrim could get from station. Would he be met?
- (o) Give writer's name and address in full.

=====

R3768 : page 135

NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE IN CHRIST JESUS.

--GALATIANS 3:28--

THE APOSTLE'S words above are often quoted to prove something that was far from his intention.

We do not blame those who misuse the quotation, nor charge that they are endeavoring to wrest the Scriptures; rather we give them credit for sincerity of intention, but presume that either they are not thorough

Bible students or else that in the fall their reasoning faculties have been seriously injured, and that they

R3768 : page 136

have not yet ascertained the defect and learned how to rectify the same so as to have the spirit of a sound mind in an examination of this Scripture. The class we refer to seem to get the impression that the Apostle means that after we have become the Lord's people, after we have made full consecration to him, there is no longer any difference between males and females, that amongst believers the ordinary sex distinctions may be dispensed with, that men may treat the women as though they were men, and women may treat the men as though they were women. This is very false reasoning, a total perversion of the Apostle's intention in the words quoted. Wherever the sex distinctions are ignored there is danger to the morals of all concerned.

The Apostle's argument taken as a whole cannot properly be construed as countenancing any disregard of sex distinctions. The Christian man is to be no less chaste and reserved than when he was a worldly man. The higher ideals of his new relationship with the Lord should make him more discreet, more highminded, more careful every way of propriety and true manliness in word, in thought, and in conduct. The Christian woman is to be no less pure in thought, in word, in conduct, than she was before she came into relationship with Christ. The Apostle uses the illustration of a chaste virgin. The word virgin signifies pure, and the word chaste implies a very special kind of purity, chastity, discretion--separateness from anything that could sully the spotless robe of Christ's imputed righteousness.

We realize well the sentiment leading to this misunderstanding of the Apostle's words. We concede that the pure love for the Lord Jesus coming into the consecrated heart tends to separate it more and more from the world and the worldly and the sinful, and that the tendrils of the heart's affections naturally seek some other support, some other fellowship, and that the fellowship of kindred minds in Christ becomes the chief attraction. We well understand, too, that while this attraction is to all who are the Lord's, male and female alike, there is necessarily a special sex attraction which is not destroyed by the transformation of our love and affection from worldly to heavenly things. Rather the heavenly mind operating through the human brain will still appreciate the attractions of the opposite sex. We agree, too, that the family relationship subsisting between the members of the Church, represented by the words brother and sister, signify very close and very dear relationship, and that the Scriptures authorize this--that we should regard our Lord Jesus as our elder brother and our Bridegroom, and

each other as brethren and sisters in the Lord.

We are not arguing against the proper recognition of these terms of precious relationship; we are not arguing against the proper enjoyment of this spiritual relationship; we are merely cautioning against any tendency to ignore or set aside the differences and barriers which even nature enjoins upon us as between the sexes. Between brothers and sisters of blood relationship there should be indeed warm affection, but never an ignoring of sex distinctions. A sister should always be treated as a sister, a brother should always be treated as a brother, and modesty and purity should ever guard the happiness of the relationship. And this should be no less the rule amongst those who have become New Creatures in Christ Jesus, to whom "old things have passed away and all things have become new." Rather these should be the more on guard, remembering that the relationship is merely spiritual and not a fleshly one.

This is indeed the consecrated key to the right understanding of the Apostle's words. When elsewhere he declares, "Ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit," no one understands him to mean that we have no flesh, and that the flesh must not be recognized and governed and kept under control. The very reverse is his thought, that we as New Creatures are no longer to be guided and controlled by the earthly interests, but especially by the spiritual interests. We have the two standpoints, both true:

(1) From the world's standpoint and from our own actual standpoint we are still in the flesh; we still have its weaknesses and blemishes to contend with, to fight against, to overcome.

(2) From the Lord's standpoint we are no longer human or fleshly beings but spirit beings--that is to say, he is dealing with us according to our new resolution, our new standing as newly begotten creatures in Christ. He is not judging us according to the weaknesses and frailties of the flesh, but according to the desires and intentions of the new mind. But the new mind will assuredly control the flesh to the extent of its ability, and nothing could be more unwise than for it to ignore the flesh and to expose itself to peculiar temptations of the flesh through a misunderstanding of the Apostle's words, "There is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus."

What does the Apostle mean? We reply: The teaching is that God accepts all those who come unto him through Christ without distinctions as to race or wealth or servitude or honor amongst men, or sex distinctions. In Christ we are one--that is to say, from God's standpoint he treats us as one, and has blessings for each and for all in the divine arrangement. Take the remainder of the Apostle's statement, "there is neither bond nor free in Christ Jesus." He does not mean by this that the slave who comes into relationship

as a member of the body of Christ is to be considered a free man, and that he is to use his time, etc., in disregard of his master's wishes. On the contrary the Apostle says, "Art thou called being a slave, seek not to be free." That is to say, Do not consider that freedom is necessary to your spiritual welfare; the Lord is able to bless you and to bring you off an overcomer as a slave as though you were the master and wealthy.

In some respects indeed the slave position may be more favorable to the attainment of the character necessary to a share in the Kingdom than the position of the Master would be. The slave was to know, however, that the Lord would not take notice of his slavery as

R3769 : page 137

respects his hopes for a place in the future Kingdom; he would have as good if not better chance for honor in the Kingdom than if he were the master, because the circumstances of life are really against the rich, the wise, the noble, the great. Likewise the Jew and the Greek: The Jew was not to think that because of the favor granted to his nation in the past that he would still have a preferential place in the Church and in the coming Kingdom; the Greek was not to think that because the Jew had been cut off from favor that therefore he would be disfavored in the eyes of the Lord as respects a place in the Kingdom. Both were to know that God would ignore their natural differences of language, heredity, etc., and reward each according to his faithfulness as a member of the body of Christ, irrespective of birth or station or sex or nation.

We are not discussing the natural differences between males and females; we have discussed that question elsewhere, and shown that the Lord has adapted the one to the other, so that each is the complement of the other. We are not here discussing the public ministries of the Church, and to what extent these are open to males and females, according to the divine arrangement --the divine Word. That subject we have dealt with elsewhere. We are here endeavoring specially to demonstrate that the Apostle's words in our text have no reference whatever to the earthly interests and associations of the people of God--that they merely relate to our standing before the Lord and our hopes and prospects as respects the Kingdom of glory, to which we have been called and for which we are striving to make our calling and election sure. The Apostle's words comfort us all when rightly understood, assuring us that if we attain a place in the Kingdom it will not be on account of our sex, race or condition as human beings.

=====

R3769 : page 137

BEREAN BIBLE STUDY FOR MAY.

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

EVIL SPEAKING AND EVIL SURMISING

IT is suggested that leaders of Berean Classes endeavor to hold the discussion of each question to its legitimate domain. Otherwise later questions will have been found partially discussed yet not thoroughly digested and much less satisfactory.

The leader should STUDY the entire lesson and each member of the class should STUDY the portion or question assigned to him or her, if the largest possible good would be derived. The DAWNS and booklets and TOWERS cited should be at hand, and so marked as to be readily referred to without a moment's delay. The DAWNS are referred to by the first six letters of the alphabet, the booklets by initial letters and the WATCH TOWER by Z.

1. What is evil speaking? Jas. 3:8-10. Z.'99-68 (2nd col. par. 1, 2.)
2. How prevalent is this fault among even those who profess to be Christians? Z.'99-69 (1st col. par. 1).
3. What is the power of the tongue? Jas. 3. F.586-588; Z.'99-75 (2nd col. par. 1); Z.'97-156 (1st col. par. 2).
4. What is meant by a "tongue set on fire of gehenna"? Jas. 3:6. Z.'00-98 (1st col., par. 5, 6).
5. What are the baneful influences of evil speaking, and what are some of the excuses and subterfuges offered by the fallen nature? Z.'99-69 (1st col. par. 2) to 70 (2nd col. par. 3); Z.'99-72 (1st col. par. 2 to 5).
6. What is evil surmising and what is its relation to evil speaking? Z.'05-213 (1st col. par. 3 to 2nd col. par. 3.)
7. What are "secret faults," and of what two kinds are they? Z.'98-22 (1st col. par. 1).
8. Is an evil suggestion a sin, and how does it become a secret fault? Z.'98-22 (1st col. par. 2 and 2nd col. par. 1); Z.'00-32 (1st col. par. 1).
9. What is a "presumptuous sin," and when does a secret fault become a presumptuous sin? Z.'98-22 (2nd col. par. 1).
10. What is the "great transgression" to which these sins lead? Z.'98-22 (2nd col. par. 1).
11. How may we purify and keep our hearts pure from these sins? Z.'99-215 (2nd col. par. 1) to 217; Z.'98-22 (2nd col. par. 2) to 23 (1st col. par. 5).
12. How is the Lord judging us? Matt. 12:34-37. Z.'96-30 (1st col. par. 1, 2).
13. Why should we render to God a daily account of any "idle" (pernicious) words? Z.'96-32 (1st col. par.

4) to 33 (1st col. par. 1, 2).

14. How are words the index of our hearts? Luke 6:45.
Z.'96-22 (1st col. par. 4 and 2nd col. par. 1); Z.'96-32
(1st col. par. 1).

15. What does purity of heart signify? Z.'02-358 (2nd
col. par. 3); Z.'05-230 (2nd col. par. 1); Z.'98-25 (2nd
col. par. 3).

16. What is the importance of a pure heart? 1 Sam. 16:7.
Z.'04-22 (2nd col. par. 6) and 23 (1st col. par.
1 to 3); Z.'01-325 (1st col. par. 4 to 2nd col. par. 1) Z.'99-140
(1st col. par. 2).

17. How may purity of heart be attained? Z.'00-359
(2nd col. par. 1) to 360 (2nd col. par. 2).

18. How do we know our motive is pure, since "the
heart is deceitful above all things"? Z.'00-359
(1st col. par. 1 to 3).

19. What is the relation between our conscience and
purity of heart? Z.'00-360 (2nd col. par. 2).

(To be continued for June.)

=====

R3769 : page 137

THE SOWING AND THE REAPING.

--MATTHEW 13:24-30,36-43.--MAY 6.--

"Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."--Gal. 6:7.

OUR LORD followed his parable showing the four
kinds of hearers of the Word (illustrated by the
wayside, the stony ground, the thorny ground and
the good ground) with the parable of the wheat and the
tares, which is the center of this lesson. An intimate connection
between the two parables is to be observed. The
majority who heard the Lord's message opposed it directly
or indirectly. The parable of the sower represents the four

R3769 : page 138

classes willing to hear at all, and shows us that but one
class of hearers could possibly bring forth the good fruit.
The present parable shows some of the difficulties which
interfere with the best hearers, the best hearts, some with
the best seed.

The parable as a whole is a picture of the Kingdom of
heaven--not in its complete and glorious Millennial reign,
but in its embryo condition, in process of development.
The Kingdom of glory will be the Church in glory, as the
Kingdom in embryo is the Church under present conditions,
called to glory, honor and immortality, but first experiencing
trials and difficulties which must be battled
against by those who would make their calling and election
sure to a share in the glory that is to follow. This Kingdom
class did not begin with Adam nor with Noah nor with Moses,

but with Christ. There was no Kingdom seed, no Kingdom promises and hopes planted, until Christ came, who brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. (2 Tim. 1:10.) As the Apostle declares, this great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by our Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. (Heb. 2:3.) It was the Son of man who sowed this good seed, and the members of his body from his day until now have continued the work--the apostles being most prominent therein.

SATAN SOWED THE TARES

"While men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat." This enemy our Lord explains is Satan --"the enemy that sowed them is the devil." On this statement Dr. Abbott wisely comments thus, "Observe that here, as elsewhere, the personality of the devil is recognized by our Lord in unmistakable terms. This is no parable, but the interpretation of a parable; it is no concession to popular prejudice, for it is uttered to his own disciples alone."

The statement that this was done "while men slept" may be interpreted, first, as signifying that while the Lord and the apostles lived the enemy did not have the opportunity for introducing the tare element; that it was done after their death, when they had fallen asleep. It is equally true that Satan did this sowing of tares while the entire Church slept, in the sense of not being wide awake to their duties and privileges. Such a period of drowsiness and slumber, non-alertness as respects the Truth, prevailed amongst the Lord's people for centuries, which are known to the civilized world as the "dark ages." Even yet the same thing is true in large measure, and the Apostle's words are appropriate, "Let us not sleep as do others." (1 Thess. 5:6.) Many of the Lord's true followers have been dreaming about the conversion of the world, while the great enemy, Satan, has been sowing tares with liberal hand in their very midst--or, as the Apostle Peter explains it, "bringing in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them."-- 2 Peter 2:1.

DARNEL COUNTERFEITS WHEAT

There are various kinds of tares in Palestine, but the

R3770 : page 138

most troublesome kind and the kind evidently referred to in the parable is known as "bearded darnel." It looks exactly like the wheat when springing up, and not until the maturity of the head is the difference discernible. Then the wheat, weighted with golden grains, humbly bows its head, while the tares stand straight, the heads having little weight and the seeds being black. At this time the difference between the tares and the wheat becomes clearly discernible.

Passing from the parable picture to the reality, we find the good seed, the gracious promises of the Kingdom, which

the Lord showed has brought forth the children of the Kingdom --true Christians who appreciate the Kingdom, who have thankfully accepted the Lord's proposition of their becoming heirs with him in that Kingdom and who heartily lay hold upon the terms of joint-heirship, that they must suffer with him if they would reign with him. (Rom. 8:17.) These Christians as they develop bring forth much fruit, some thirty, some sixty and some an hundred grains, representing the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit--representing them as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, "God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works"--begotten of the Spirit through the Word of Truth. (Eph. 2:10.) Contrarywise the darnel class are those not begotten of the Truth but of error--misled into forms of godliness without its real power.

THE DEVIL SOWED THE DARNEL

Who planted the seeds of error which have developed this class? The Scriptures answer, Satan, the devil. But why should he plant or develop any teachings that would bring forth imitation Christians, those who are outwardly godly? Would he not rather plant seeds of immorality, etc.? We answer that he already has a large part of the field, the world, under cultivation along the lines of ignorance, superstition, etc., as the Apostle declares--the heathen worship devils. (1 Cor. 10:20.) The work of Satan as represented in this parable is one of expectancy. He is not so anxious for the development of the tare class as he is anxious to choke the wheat. This purpose can better be accomplished by the sowing of tares than by other sowings, which from the first would show widely in contrast and could be exterminated. It is the fact that the darnel-tare exactly resembles the wheat for a considerable time, which makes it the more dangerous, the more troublesome to eradicate. And so it is with the tare class of Christendom: respectable, educated, influential in outward morals and demeanor, closely resembling the Lord's consecrated ones, there is no means of discerning their different character at first.

GATHERING OUT THE TARES

In the parable the servants inquired of the Master whether or not they should pull up the tares, but his answer is that the tares are so abundant that this procedure would be unwise, impossible. In eastern countries a certain amount of tares spring up with the wheat anyway, and these the servants gather out as soon as discerned, because the darnel seed is poisonous. So with the Church: the parable would be true if the Lord had left out all reference to the enemy sowing the tares amongst the wheat, and if then he had proceeded to say that certain tares sprang up with it. Naturally there would be some imitation Christians with the true anyway, just as darnel is usually found amongst the wheat in that country. But our Lord wished to show an abnormal condition--that the tare seed

was specially sown for the very purpose of choking the wheat. This is in harmony with the Apostle's statement,

R3770 : page 139

"We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits in high positions."--Eph. 6:12.

We have today not merely the natural downward tendency of the human heart toward forms of godliness without the power, but, far worse than this, the wicked spirits--Satan and his associates, fallen angels--have been plotting against the divine plan and operating with a view to thwarting the same all through this age. The Master in this parable showed that he foreknew all this and that it was a part of the divine plan to permit it. In permitting it the Lord does not endorse it nor make himself responsible for it, but he will eventually so overthrow it as to bring out of the evil certain valuable lessons for all eternity.

One of the lessons most difficult for the Lord's true people to learn is that the masses of Christendom are tares, having merely the form of godliness but knowing nothing of its inward power. As they see the wheat-field overrun with these they are inclined to think that the majority must be the wheat, and the comparatively few stocks that are real wheat they are inclined to consider fanatical extremists. Only those who are themselves begotten of the Spirit through the Word of truth, the good seed of the Kingdom--only these as they ripen are prepared to properly discriminate and to note the difference of fruitage, and, looking backward, to draw their comparisons as between the Lord, the apostles and the early believers, and the true wheat of the same class and character today. The entire parable fully attests this.

OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE TARES

(1) They were not merely such as usually sprang up amongst the wheat. The parable declares that they were sown in the same systematic manner as the wheat, and with the deliberate intention of ruining the wheat-field--choking the wheat.

(2) It shows that the tares were too numerous to be dealt with after the ordinary fashion of pulling up--that such a procedure would have unsettled everything as respects the interests of the true wheat in the present time.

(3) It shows the same preponderance of the tares in the picture of the harvest, when it is the tares and not the wheat which is gathered and bound in bundles, the wheat evidently in smaller proportionate quantity being taken directly to the barns unbundled--precious, scarce.

This parable pictures what we are to expect as the result of the entire work of grace throughout this Gospel age. The results will be a tremendous harvest of tares and a comparatively small gathering of the precious wheat.

Spiteful enmity, such as is represented in this parable as moving the devil to injure the wheat-field, to choke the

wheat, is not without its parallel in human affairs. As, for instance, not long since the public prints told how a tenant in Ireland, having been evicted from a farm property he had long rented, felt spiteful toward the owner and sowed the fields with wild oats. In the case of Satan we can see that his course in the matter has been in full accord with his entire procedure from the time of the beginning of his rebellion against God. He deceived our first parents by malicious representations of the divine character and by falsehood, telling them that God had forbidden the eating of the fruit of the trees of knowledge of good and evil because he desired to keep them in ignorance, lest they should become competitors with him in knowledge, again assuring them that the Almighty was unable to execute the sentence against them, "Dying thou shalt die."

All the way down the history of the world shows Satan's opposition. Amongst heathen nations today, everywhere, he has planted the seeds of error and blasphemy against God, misrepresenting his character and his plan and making them to appear adverse. And these same seeds of error he has planted in the wheat-field of Christendom, scattering it so that it would intermingle with the truths of the Lord's Word. This evil seed is represented in all the false doctrines of the "dark ages," which misrepresent the divine character and plan. Those influenced by the errors of Satan are begotten of fear and not of love, not of the spirit of truth with which the Lord begets those who are truly his, the wheat; and only in the latter can perfect love cast out fear and bring the fruitage and graces of the holy Spirit in heart and in character, in word and in deed. The error brings merely outward forms of Sabbath keeping, Church going, decency and morality, but does not affect the heart so as to bring forth the fruitage of consecration, self-sacrifice, etc., which are the essential qualities of the wheat class which the Lord is now developing.

"THE HARVEST, THE END OF THE AGE"

Neither in this parable nor elsewhere does the Lord intimate that the present order of things is to continue--the strife between truth and error, between righteousness and sin, with the latter predominating in every way. Quite to the contrary, the Scriptures everywhere teach that the present age had a particular beginning and that it will have as positive and particular an ending. Unfortunately the translators of our common version Bible have used the word "world" here and in other places instead of the word "age" or "epoch" or "dispensation." Nothing could be further from the Scriptural teaching than that the earth is to be destroyed in the harvest time when the wheat will be gathered.

On the contrary, the wheat class now being selected will be glorified and, as this lesson shows, "Then will the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13:43.) They will shine forth for the blessing of mankind, to bring order out of present confusion, to scatter present darkness and ignorance and superstition,

to cause the knowledge of the glory of God to fill the whole earth, to enlighten every man that has ever come into the world, to cause all to know from the least to the greatest of the love of God and the abundant provision which he has made, which guarantees that none shall die the Second Death except the wilfully, intelligently disobedient.--John 1:9; Hab. 2:14; Jer. 31:34.

To our understanding we are already living in this harvest time, and this accounts for the wonderful commotion and changes which we are anticipating in the wheat-field, in Christendom. The time of separation has come, and the Lord will make no mistake: not a single tare will be gathered into the barn--beyond the veil into the heavenly condition and glory; and as respects the wheat, the harvest is to ripen, and not a ripe head of wheat, whether it bear thirty or sixty or a hundred fold, will be left in the field or burned with the tares, but all will be safely garnered--gathered to the Lord.

The angels are already at work--the Lord uses various

R3771 : page 140

human instrumentalities as his servants, messengers or angels. The bundles of human organization are tending more and more to combination, federation. Not only those institutions styling themselves churches, including Christian Scientists, but other institutions, orders, etc., are combining. The harvest time is specially favorable to the ripening of the wheat, and the Lord's true people everywhere are finding assistances in the growing in grace and knowledge and the fruits of the Spirit such as they never have enjoyed before, because we are in the harvest time, and because the Lord is providing these angels, messengers of Truth and Grace, for our assistance and development.

"CAST THEM INTO A FURNACE OF FIRE"

With false fears already in their hearts there is a disposition to interpret this statement about the tares being cast into a furnace of fire and all other similar statements of the Scriptures as literal, as signifying eternal torment. We notice, however, that the parable strictly limits this furnace time to the harvest of the age: there is no such furnace for the wheat and tares all down through the Gospel age--they are to be gathered in the end of the age and to be burned in a furnace. This certainly is very contrary to the ordinary conception of the matter, that immediately at death many pass to an eternity of torture. If this statement had any reference to a torture time, either for eternity or for a shorter period, it certainly limits the time of its beginning to the harvest time, the end of this age.

But let us look at the figure and we will see more particularly what this feature of the parable signifies. The field is the world, the wheat are the Lord's people who rise up out of the world and bring forth fruit to his praise, the result of the good seed, the gracious promises and arrangements

of the Kingdom which inspire them with hope, faith, perseverance to the end. This is the class which the Lord seeks, the only class. He is not dealing with the field, the world in general, but merely with the corner of it which he has planted with the good seed. The other parts of the field, the world, are not in the parable at all. When the farmer gathered his crop to the barn it was his custom to burn the tares, so that the seed might not propagate further and thus cause additional trouble; hence it was the usage to burn the tares in bake-ovens, to use them as we would use kindling wood, for heating the oven for the baking of bread.

Everything in this figure of the burning of the tares, therefore, would signify nothing approximating torment; it simply illustrates destruction. When the tares are burned they are reduced to dust and become again a part of the field, the world. So we understand it will be in the end of this age: the Lord will permit various agencies to enkindle a great fire of trouble--"a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1.) With this fire the tare class will have terminated, for so-called Christendom will be the great furnace. True, there will be trouble in the outside heathen nations also, but the trouble will specially affect civilized nominal Christendom--Churchianity. By the time that trouble has ended imitation Christians will all have disappeared, there will be no more. The true Christians, the Kingdom class, the elect, will have been changed in the First Resurrection to heavenly conditions; the remainder of mankind will all be of the earth earthy and make no pretensions whatever to be called-out ones of the heavenly order.

WEeping AND GNASHING OF TEETH

There will surely be great disappointment, sorrow, pain, trouble and anguish throughout Christendom in that "day of trouble." Already, as our Master predicted, men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after the things that are coming upon the earth (Luke 21:25-28); but their fears and their anguish will not be eternal. When the trouble shall have accomplished its work of mellowing society and preparing mankind for the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom, when it shall have burned itself out, it will be no more, and instead of trouble blessings shall come in--not upon the tares, but upon those who once were tares, yea, upon all the families of the earth shall the blessings come through the seed of Abraham, the glorified Christ, Head and body. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." All cannot understand or appreciate, or receive this message, and this our Lord clearly foresaw and declared, saying, "He that hath an ear let him hear." Neither should we despise those who cannot hear, but rather we may sympathize with them and be thankful to the Lord for the hearing ear which permits us to appreciate these and other features of the divine plan.

OUR GOLDEN TEXT

Our caption, our Golden Text, is true enough and carries with it a very valuable thought, but one totally out of accord with the lesson of this parable. The parable represents the Lord as the sower, the Truth as the seed and true followers as the result. The Golden Text pictures a totally different matter, and points us to the fact that the seeds of today will bring forth fruitage by and by, whether they be good seeds of kind words, gentleness, meekness, patience, helpfulness, or evil words and evil conduct, backbiting, slandering and evil doing. Every act, every word, every look, every thought is a seed, and will bring its results in our own minds and hearts and conduct, and have to do with whether or not we shall bring forth thirty, sixty, or a hundred-fold or no fruitage whatever, or an evil fruitage, which the Lord declares he will utterly destroy in the time of reckoning in the end of this age. All who are the Lord's true people can profitably apply both lessons, but they must not be confounded or confusion will result.

=====

R3771 : page 140

"CLOTHED AND IN HIS RIGHT MIND."

--MARK 5:1-20--MAY 13.--

Golden Text:--"Go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee."

THOSE who deny the personality of Satan must logically also deny the personality of demons, so frequently referred to in the Scriptures, including this lesson. The Scriptures clearly set forth a prince of devils, Satan, and his subordinates, and as clearly refer to them as individuals possessed of intelligence and reason. We are aware of the subtlety of the arguments by which those who disbelieve in spirit beings invisible to men deny intelligences that cannot be recognized by the five human senses; but surely they find it hard to "kick against the pricks"--to deal honestly

R3771 : page 141

with the divine records and yet hold to their position.

The people of God will find it best to be humble, not to attempt to be wise above what is written, to admit that their knowledge is limited and to accept the divine testimony without wresting it, subverting it, misconstruing into harmony with their own ignorance. Their objection is that these people were simply insane and not possessed by demons--that if demons possessed mankind then we should expect similar possessions today. We answer that in our judgment a large proportion of the so-called insane are in that condition because they are obsessed or possessed by demons--wicked spirits--the one-time angels who kept not their first estate.
--Jude 6.

OBSSESSED BY DEMONS

The picture of this poor man's condition is most vividly given. There are many similarly possessed in our day confined in asylums, in padded cells, where they can harm neither themselves nor others. Very few are aware to what extent insanity has a hold upon humanity even in civilized lands. If the comparatively small State of South Carolina has 1247 inmates in its Lunatic Asylum, imagine how many there are in the asylums of the most populous States and throughout the world. Alas, poor creatures! would that we had the power to bid the demons come out of them! How glad we are that it will not be very long until he who has the power, the rightful authority to deliver mankind from the power of sin and Satan and death, will exercise it--when Satan shall be bound and the judgment of the fallen angels shall proceed as the Apostle has foretold. (1 Cor. 6:3.) It is not for us to guess how many or how few of those debauched spirits will under favorable influences be rescued from their infamous condition, but it is for us to rejoice that the Lord has provided for their judgment, their trial, their testing, and that his grace is sufficient for the delivery of all who under full opportunity shall demonstrate a thorough conversion to righteousness.

As there were no asylums at that time, the maniacs, demonized, were subject to the private care of their friends, and the one of our lesson, we are informed, had been frequently bound hand and foot, but manifested a wonderful strength, breaking his cords and fetters, and, leaving his home, roamed wildly in the mountainous places and caves

R3772 : page 141

and open tombs of the limestone formation of that country.

Verse 6 tells us that he saw Jesus from afar and ran to meet him. He must have seen the boat coming across the lake of Galilee, heading for the coast near where he was, because we have the statement that he met Jesus immediately upon the landing of the ship (v. 2). Quite probably the disciples were considerably alarmed to see the maniac thus come running toward them as the ship landed, and doubtless they were surprised when he fell upon his knees and worshiped Jesus, crying out in a loud voice, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God that you torment me not." Apparently Jesus had already begun to command that the unclean spirit should come out of the man, and this entreaty not to be tormented was apparently a plea for extension of time, not too great haste. Another account says, "Art thou come to torment us before the time?" Another similar statement is, "Art thou come to destroy us before the time?"

The thought apparently would be that the demons understood that God had a time appointed which would mark the limitation of their liberties and opportunities in connection with the tormenting of mankind by obsession, as in this

case. The false reasoning exhibited in this expression, this implication that an interference with their tormenting of mankind would be an injury to their rights, their liberties, seems peculiar; yet we know that there are many amongst men who have similarly perverted notions of what are their rights, their liberties--to impose upon the rights of others, to defraud others, to mislead others to their injury. It is common today for men to claim that their rights and liberties are interfered with when they are estopped from pillaging and variously injuring their fellow-creatures. When great corporations, affecting to be public servants chartered by the Commonwealth, use their opportunities to the public injury, contrary to the public welfare, they also cry out, Let us alone--you are interfering with our vested rights.

WHAT HAVE WE IN COMMON?

The expression, "What have I to do with thee?" might be more literally rendered, "What have we in common?" Truly there is nothing in common between the Son of God and his mission and the demons and their work; and all Christian people who recognize the work of these demons through spirit mediums, hypnotism, mental science, Christian Science, etc., should be on guard; none should have anything whatever to do with them. They should remember that there is nothing in common between the Lord and these powers--that to have anything to do with these is to neglect the divine counsel and to jeopardize their peace and all their best interests.

The plea of the demon apparently arrested the Lord's command and he made inquiry as to his name. We may not unreasonably suppose that the Lord knew that the man was possessed of a legion, a great number, of fallen spirits, but that he took this method of bringing out the answer for the sake of his disciples and the others who crowded around. Everything we know on the subject goes to corroborate the thought that the evil spirits do not have special pleasure in their own company, and that they are debarred from all intercourse with the holy angels, and that therefore they are specially solicitous of being in contact with humanity and of gaining possession of human beings whom they may use as their agents, through whom they may operate and come in contact with others.

Apparently God has so arranged the human mind that it is invulnerable to the attacks of these evil spirits except as some special condition may give them opportunity: apparently the will of the individual must consent in some measure to their cooperation. We may see that none would consent did they possess full knowledge of what they were doing, but the entertainment of evil thoughts, the practice of vicious habits, seems to a considerable degree to break down the will and to give admittance to these evil spirits to have control of it, and, through the will, the mind and the body.

From what we see and from what the Scriptures declare we have every reason to expect that there will be a greater

onslaught of these evil spirits upon humanity in the near future. To our understanding hypnotism, mind cure, etc., are already operating in large degree toward this end-- toward the bringing of the human will into that condition

R3772 : page 142

where it will be amenable to the influences of these evil spirits. The influences of Spiritism and Christian Science and Theosophy are all, we believe, cooperating in the same direction. Terrible will the harvest be! Thank God, the reign of Satan and his minions will be brief! We are nearing the time when Satan shall be bound for a thousand years that he may deceive and obsess humanity no more until the thousand years be finished.--Rev. 20:2,3.

THE DEMON-POSSESSED SWINE

Scholars are of the opinion that this part of the country was largely inhabited by foreigners, the owners of large herds of swine. While the Jews did not eat swine's flesh the foreigners did, especially the Roman soldiers, and doubtless the swine industry of those parts must have been a very lucrative one, on which account, perhaps, the Jews of that vicinity were favorable to it, being more or less interested in its prosperity, just as many farmers are interested in the prosperity of breweries, distilleries, etc., because through these they find a market for their crops, and other advantages through the money thus put into circulation.

There was a herd of swine numbering about two thousand near by. (From this we have the intimation that it was quite a swine-producing country, and that there may have been numerous herds as large or larger.) The demons possessing the man besought Jesus that they might not be sent away, that they might not be condemned to the abyss--to the Second Death, to utter destruction, but that they might be allowed to remain in that country even if he should demand that they should leave the man. They asked permission to go into the herd of swine near by and the Lord permitted it.

Swine were condemned under the Jewish Law, and may therefore have been considered contraband and their destruction authorized. At all events we may know that our Lord violated no principle of justice in permitting the demons to take possession of the swine. But here we would ask those who admit the truth of this narrative but deny obsession, deny that the man was afflicted with evil spirits--we ask them in what way they would attempt to account for the transfer of a disease of the mind from a man to a herd of two thousand hogs? It cannot be accounted for except on the hypothesis that a legion of evil spirits possessed the man, and that these evil spirits took possession of the swine instead, a spirit for each hog.

Whatever may have been the hopes of the demons in respect to these brutes they evidently were disappointed. Man, with his higher organization, is able apparently to stand

much more mental torment than the brute creation. The effect upon the brains of the swine was such as to make them crazy, and in their insanity the whole herd rushed down a steep embankment and were choked in the sea.

This miracle of healing as well as the permission of the demons to enter into the swine was doubtless intended and permitted to be a demonstration to the people of those parts of the power of the Lord over evil spirits, a demonstration also of the fact that they were evil spirits as made clear by the conduct of the swine into which they entered. And this lesson, we believe, was intended more particularly for the Lord's people of the Gospel age than for those who were witnesses of the miracle and its results.

We can imagine the swine-herders barely escaping with their lives from the rush of the crazy beasts toward the sea. We can imagine their fear and perplexity and their haste as they ran to tell the owners of the herd what had happened --to clear themselves of responsibility and to tell them that the man who caused the difficulty was still near the spot. It took but a little while for the owners and herdsmen and, one account says, all the people of the city to come to where Jesus was. On their arrival they saw the demoniac sitting at Jesus' feet, "clothed and in his right mind." In his insanity he had torn off clothing and everything, but now peace and serenity reigned.

THEY IMplored HIS DEPARTURE

What was the effect of the miracle upon the people? Did they rejoice and glorify God that a fellow-creature had been delivered from the power of the demons? This certainly would have been the proper course, the natural course for people in the right attitude of mind, which these were not. On the contrary, selfishness reigned in their hearts instead of love and sympathy; hence they did not hail Jesus as their friend and deliverer, nor say, "Come on, Master and Teacher, we have other poor people here afflicted of the devil, cast out from them the evil spirits also. We have others who are sick and who need your healing; we all need your instruction that we may put off the works of darkness and put on the garments of light and righteousness." Instead of thus reasoning they thought on the opposite side, the selfish side of the question. Two thousand hogs are lost, several thousand dollars worth of property has been destroyed. If this man remain and should cast out any more devils and allow them to go into other herds of swine it might wreck all the business of this prosperous country.

This is exactly the reasoning of a large proportion of mankind in respect to the liquor traffic and its manufacture. Selfishness reigns; evidently the world will not vote for the new dispensation and the reign of Christ and the binding of Satan, and because they are unwilling to cooperate for their own deliverance, their help must come in another way--by

the fall of present institutions and the establishment of the Kingdom of God's dear Son in power and great glory, the binding of Satan and the uplifting of all the debased ones and the enlightening of the whole world.

What further evidence do we need that those people, professing to be the chosen people of God, professing to hope for the coming of Messiah and his Kingdom, were making such professions only with their lips and that they did not come from the heart? They loved better the ways of sin than the promised ways of righteousness. Our Lord did not force himself upon them--with his disciples he again entered into the ship to leave their shore. The time had not yet come to establish the Kingdom by force. That was deferred until the election, the selection of the faithful ones, should be accomplished --the selection of the Israelites indeed from amongst natural Israel, and eventually, by the begetting of the Spirit, from among all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues, to whom the message of God's love and grace will be sent. Soon the selection will be accomplished and the reign of Messiah begin.

While it would not be true to say that all mankind are possessed of devils, possessed of these evil spirits, these demons, and we thank God that it is not so, yet it would be

R3773 : page 143

true to say that through the influence of evil all mankind has become more or less possessed of the spirit of demons, the spirit of selfishness, the spirit of sin, alienation from God. From this standpoint the whole world is slightly insane, some more, some less so.

The Apostle corroborates this thought, saying of those who have accepted Christ and who have received of his Spirit, the new mind, that they have "the spirit of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7.) He thus implies that previously they did not have a sound mind, and that the world in general does not have a sound mind, but unsound. The poor man out of whom a legion of devils was cast is an extreme example of all out of whom the spirit of evil is cast through the power of the Truth. We are not so bad as he, thank God! No! Nevertheless it was not until we had received the new mind of Christ, not until the old things were done away and all things became new that we really stood at Jesus' feet, clothed and in our right mind. (2 Cor. 5:17.)

Thank God for the clothing which we have in Christ's robe of righteousness, covering our blemishes and imperfections, the bruises of sin and the injury which we did to ourselves! Thank God that this is stopped, that we can now see things from the better standpoint, from the only true standpoint.

The healed man alone appreciated Jesus of all the people of that country. They wished him to depart, but this poor man entreated the Lord that he might go with him, that he might become one of his disciples. How touching! What a picture we have of those who receive the spirit of a sound mind, who now long to be with the Lord, who now

long to be his disciples, to proclaim him to others, who now appreciate him as others do not. As the Apostle declared, "To you, who believe, he is precious." (1 Pet. 2:7.) The man may have been fearful of being left lest the demons should take possession of him again, or he may have been ashamed of his previous course in life and of his old associates, and thought to find new ones; but more probably we think he desired to be a witness to the Lord respecting the great blessing which he had received through him.

"GO TO THY HOME AND THY FRIENDS"

While Jesus refused the request he did not spurn the consecration, but sent the man back to his home and his friends, saying, "Tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." And he departed and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done to him: and all men did marvel." We know not how many of the people as a result of that preaching ultimately became the Lord's disciples--after Pentecost, after the Spirit dispensation had been ushered in, under the power and guidance of which all the Israelites indeed were found and sealed by the Truth as followers of the Lord. We may reasonably suppose that there was some fruitage of the labor. Indeed our Lord's journey on that occasion seems to have resulted in the conversion of but the one person, the demoniac, his subsequent work there being done through him.

We thank God that the proportion of those possessed by evil spirits is comparatively small, and we thank him also that amongst the whole of unsound minds we and others who have heard his message have been reached by it, reclaimed, and that we have come to the feet of Jesus clothed and in our right minds. Has he not a work for us to do? If we cannot be the apostles to follow his footsteps we can at least follow the example of this one freed from the demons: we can go to our own homes and to our friends and there confess the Lord and his mighty power in us. We can thus sound forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light; we can thus be co-laborers together with God in the ministry of the Truth, in the ministry of reconciliation, telling how great things the Lord hath done for us. Moreover, we are glad that he has had compassion on us, forgiven our sins, and, when we consecrated, accepted us and adopted us into the heavenly family and made us partakers of his holy Spirit and commanded us to proclaim the good tidings of his grace.

Truly it would appear that none who have received God's favors thus should receive them in vain--that all so honored should be awakened to newness of life and energy in the service of the Lord. One of the best testimonies we have ever heard as respects the power of Christian living and its influence upon others was from a lady who asked to be remembered in prayer, that she might be enabled to see clearly and to follow the Truth. Subsequently we asked her why she had been anxious to see the Truth, and her reply was: "I have a sister-in-law who has received this

Truth, and her course in life since has convinced me that there is a power in the religion of Jesus that I did not previously recognize. For years I have been an agnostic, an unbeliever, and my friends and associates are of this class. I thought there was nothing to religion but merely ignorance and superstition, but when my sister took up with the MILLENNIAL DAWN views it made such a great change in her life, all her conduct seemed so transformed, that I said to myself, "There is a power, there must be truth in the religion of Jesus, for I see it now demonstrated in the life of this woman, and I desire the same for myself."

O, that we all might be diligent to be thus faithful stewards of the grace of God, and faithful representatives of our great Redeemer--not only witnessing with our lips, but in all the departments of life testifying that we are now sane, that we have now the spirit of a sound mind, that we love the things that are right and true and noble and good, that we hate and are living in opposition to the things which are sinful and contrary to the mind of the Lord and the ways of righteousness.

=====

R3774 : page 143

A TIMELY WARNING TO THE CLASSES

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

There is a little matter I thought might be well to mention to you. And that is: A smooth, clever "confidence man" is extensively "working" the Truth people, in these parts at least. He has a number of very clever stories and schemes by which he is very successful in gaining the confidence of the unsuspecting and securing good sums of money and other favors. He is well posted about our religious affairs and talks glibly about Brother Russell, the Pilgrim brethren and others; also about conventions, etc. He gave his name here as James Marshall Stuart of Troy, N.Y. He is short of stature, smooth face, and is easily identified by a badly deformed right eye.

He tried to "work" us but failed. A close study of his countenance made me suspicious, and so I made investigation and found him to be a fraud. As the Truth people are generally guileless and easy of entreatment he has a good field, and it makes the matter rather serious where he is entertained, as it affords a good opportunity to rob.

Yours in the best of bonds, G. B. IMHOFF,--Iowa.

=====

page 145

CONTENTS.

Views from the Watch Tower.....147
 Sadly Confused Teaching.....147
 Reformation by Surgery.....148
 Hell Cut From Creed.....148
Beloved, Be of Good Cheer.....149
A Stone of Stumbling.....151
"Ashamed of Me and My Word".....152
Trifling With Conscience.....153
 John the Baptist Versus Herod Antipas.....155
 "Shame and Lasting Contempt".....156
He Giveth Food to the Hungry.....156
 "Give Ye Them to Eat".....157
 Gathering Up the Fragments.....159
A Message from the San Francisco Friends.....159

page 146

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.

=====

MISSIONARY ENVELOPES

These are now in stock in large quantity. Every letter you send through the mail may be a more or less potent messenger of the Truth, even on its outside, by the use of these envelopes. They catch the attention not only of those to whom they are addressed, but postmen and others have an opportunity, and sometimes the curiosity, to read their message of peace--the gospel in condensed form. Price, 25c per 100, postpaid.

FOR YOUR FRIENDS

Some will read a newspaper who will not read a tract. We now can supply in any quantity--The Six Eaton-Russell Debates together in one issue of the Gazette and "To Hell and Back" in another issue, and "The Resurrection of Damnation" in a third.

We can supply these post free at one cent each to any address in any quantity. Order at once.

R3776 : page 146

BROTHER RUSSELL'S WEEKLY SERMONS

Some friends living in Oklahoma and Indian Territories would like to subscribe for a daily newspaper of that vicinity publishing the Editor's weekly sermons. They can be accommodated if a sufficient number of subscriptions are received.

=====

R3773 : page 147

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

SADLY CONFUSED TEACHING

THE Christian Evangelist, in a prominent article entitled, "What is the Soul?" says:

"To man is given the power to create an immortal soul, and father and mother walk hand in hand with God. It is fitting that the halo of love should shine around the mated pair, and that the new home should glow with light from the glory-world, for Eden's morn is dawning again to sweet new souls--souls that are born of man and also born of God."

When our friends of the Christian denomination get sufficiently awake to inquire for a Scripture authority for all religious teaching, the editor of the Evangelist and others will criticize what is published much

more thoroughly than they do now; and a totally unscriptural article of the kind referred to will not appear in journals claiming "No creed but the Bible."

The idea that God would go into partnership with the majority of parents who know him not or who are his enemies through wicked works is absurd on the face of it, as well as unscriptural. Worse, it is blasphemy against God! The very idea! That God should be charged with the responsibility of the direct creation of the poor misshapen, diseased little babes, the one-half of which have not vitality enough to reach maturity, is surely the product of a deficient or sadly misdirected reason. Let God be true, though at the risk of making out that many men are liars or foolish. God's Word declares that infants are "born in sin, shapen in iniquity"; and the only exceptions to this rule are the comparatively few children of the sanctified. (I Cor. 7:14.) That the image of God has largely given place to the image of Satan is manifest in the many who "go astray as soon as they are born" (Psa. 53:3), and respecting some of whom our Lord declared, "Ye are of your father the devil, for his works ye do."-- John 8:44.

Alas that we must admit it, but who will deny that

R3774 : page 147

some dogs are far better born than are some of Adam's degenerate race? Aye, some of them with better dispositions, too--more of meekness, gentleness, patience and love; and less of anger, hatred and strife. If God has so arranged his laws of nature that each can bring forth after his own kind, why should not man, the highest of earthly creatures, have the same powers? Why should it be claimed that in man's case God interferes and helps produce the idiotic and mentally and physically unbalanced which constitute the majority of our race? Why should this be urged, not only without Scripture proof but contrary to the Bible's express teachings?

THERE IS ALWAYS A REASON

The reason is the desire to prove the immortality of the soul, which centuries of Platonic philosophy has foisted upon the world as essential to any hope of a future life. Plato's followers tell us that this wisdom of a heathen poet is implied in the Bible though never stated in it. We answer, to the contrary, that the Bible most explicitly limits immortality to the Father and the Son (I Tim. 6:16), and holds out to the saints the hope of "glory, honor and immortality" at the end of life's race.-- Rom. 2:7.

The hope of eternal life, according to the Bible, is not a power in man to live forever, but a power in God to raise man from the dead and to perpetually supply the

conditions essential to an everlasting existence. Death is the wage or penalty of God's law against sinners: the death of Jesus was the ransom for sinners; and the resurrection promised in the Millennial morning is the salvation provided--a salvation from death, a raising up from the fallen condition of sin and its penalty to the life and perfection originally lost. "By man death, by man also the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive."-- I Cor. 15:21,22.

Note the inconsistencies involved. (1) For God to interfere with human pro-creation and insert a Platonic "spark of deity" into every idiotic or degenerate babe to make them death-proof would be in direct contradiction to his sentence against the race, "Dying thou shalt

R3774 : page 148

die." (2) It would make meaningless our Lord's words, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7), by implying that man's begetting and God's begetting are simultaneous. (3) If more than 100,000 infants are born each day, and myriads more are begotten that never reach birth, the Christian Evangelist must believe in a host of Gods kept busy day and night supervising and assisting in a very unholy and everyway quite unsatisfactory work. No wonder intelligent infidels despise such nonsense, and, thinking it is Bible teaching, repudiate the latter. (4) According to this false theory the whole matter of eternal torment is God's responsibility and fault; because if God would but exercise reasonable discretion in bestowing the gift of immortality and not cooperate in the birth of those unfit for everlasting bliss there would be none to torment.

What serious confusion comes from false reasoning, human guessing, contrary to God's Word. We devote some space to this matter, not from opposition to the no doubt well-meaning writer, but because the error is widespread. Yes, we are ashamed to say it, this is the maudlin view of Christendom as a whole. Let us whose eyes the Lord has opened to a clearer, saner, holier view of his divine plan be vigilant and wise and lovingly kind in helping to the light and food now provided all who give any evidence of hungering and thirsting after truth.

REFORMATION BY SURGERY

The newspapers recount a peculiar case which contains a lesson. A boy of 12 years, Harold Hurley, was about to be sent by his parents to a Reform School, because he was so incorrigible. An officer of the Toledo Juvenile Court noticed a scar on the boy's head, and inquiry developed the fact that it came from a fall when

the boy was five years old, and that his incorrigibility dated from about that time. He was sent to a hospital where a surgical operation was performed, and the pressure of a broken bone was removed from the brain. Gradually the boy returned to his former condition of mind and became obedient. His mother is quoted as saying:--

"Dr. Donnelly states that the pressure of that piece of bone upon the brain had gradually dulled all the higher sensibilities, and if it had gone on Harold would, in time, have become an utter degenerate. No one knows how thankful we are today that our boy has been saved from Lancaster Reform School, where he would have been constantly punished for things for which we now know he would not have been responsible."

It is impossible for us to know what proportion of the morally weak and bad, the wicked, the merciless and the untruthful are to some extent what circumstances and conditions, mental, moral and physical, have helped to make them. Yet according to the general view the boy above described would have gone to eternal torment. That is to say, no one would claim that he was fit for heaven, and under the general assumption there would have been no other place to put him.

How grandly reasonable is the plan of God, which, while telling us that only a "little flock" of overcomers of the world, the flesh and the devil will go to heaven, tells us also that God has provided that "times of restitution" shall shortly begin, in which all the weak and depraved and ignorant, however unfit for heaven, shall have one full chance of restitution to the full perfection of human nature in the Paradise of God restored under the whole heavens. All of this glorious provision, let us never forget, is in and through the ransom paid by our dear Redeemer, who "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."--I Tim. 2:6.

HELL CUT FROM CREED

From the Chicago Record-Herald

Valparaiso, Ind., April 12.--Hell fire and the brimstone griddle have no more terrors for the devout Presbyterians of northwestern Indiana. Simple and painless annihilation has been officially declared to be all that the souls of George Ade's sinful fellow-hoosiers need fear in the hereafter. The experts in salvation have discovered that for more than 1,000 years mankind has been laboring under a delusion about the fate of those who are turned away from the pearly gates by St. Peter.

At the meeting of the Logansport Presbytery, which has just adjourned its spring session in this city, it was

decided that the words "eternal torment" and "everlasting punishment" should be stricken from the articles of the creed. "Destruction" was the substitute which the ministers and laymen, representing forty-three congregations in this section of the State, recommended. This action will be submitted for the approval of the general assembly of the denomination, to be held in Des Moines, Iowa, in May.

DOGMA NOT AUTHORIZED

Without a dissenting vote the members of the Presbytery expressed their conviction that the word "torment," as implying an unending series of diabolical tortures in flames, conducted under the personal supervision of Lucifer, was not authorized by the Bible. They expressed a conviction that such a dogma tended to retard the development of the Presbyterian faith. It was admitted, however, that this view would be deemed revolutionary by many of the strict followers of John Calvin, and probably would cause much dissension. Many objections have already been made by the conservative elements in the congregations.

Rev. A. C. Beckes, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of this city, said, in commenting upon the step: "Of course our action will have no effect unless the general assembly coincides. That body must approve before the words 'torment' and 'punishment' can be stricken out of the confession of faith. Our vote is simply the expression of forty-three ministers and forty-three laymen of the northwestern counties in Indiana."

=====

R3775 : page 149

BELOVED, BE OF GOOD CHEER

ZION'S WATCH TOWER'S Editor realizes that his friends far and near have been caused intense pain through the publication of malicious falsehoods respecting him. Few of the papers which published the falsehoods were interested to publish the refutations of the same. Thus we have confirmed the old adage that "A lie will travel around the world before the truth gets its boots on." Under the present reign of "the prince of this world" error, falsehood, slander, can be easily circulated--need but to be whispered to travel far and near, aided by willing tongues and pens. Truth and Justice, on the contrary, appeal less to the majority of the fallen race, and at the present time are at a discount and disadvantage. The time is coming when He who is the Truth as well as the Way and the Life, will reign, and all these influences pertinent to the curse will be changed. "Behold I

make all things new."

The Lord's people differ one from another as did the disciples of old. To any who, like the Apostle Thomas, need further evidences as a basis for continued faith, we say in the Master's words, Stretch hither thy hand: write to us. We will not be offended. Be not faithless, but believing. To the uncharitable, ever willing to believe evil and doubt the pure and good, no answer would be satisfactory. To the majority of the pure in heart, and especially to those who are acquainted with the Editor personally or through his writings, it will probably be all sufficient to state in general terms that the news-paper reports above referred to are unjust slanders which wholly misrepresent him. He assures you now in these few words that, born of Christian parents in relationship to the Lord, he confirmed that relationship by an individual faith and consecration at the age of 15 years: that since then he has endeavored to live in all good conscience toward God and his fellow men, without exception. His teachings are recognized by those familiar with them as belonging to the very highest plane of Christian ethics; and he hereby assures you all that in all his relationships of life he has diligently sought to live as nearly up to these high Christian ideals as possible, trusting in the merit of the Redeemer for the covering and forgiveness of blemishes which he realizes, as well as of others of which he is ignorant, but which the Lord might see. He believes that not a soul in the world can point to a single act of cruelty or unkindness or injustice or lovelessness on his part toward any of the human family, nor even toward any of the brute creation. His consecration vows to the Lord doubtless did guide his course of conduct somewhat differently from what it otherwise would have been, and in consequence the worldly have misunderstood, misinterpreted him, even as they did the Lord and various of his faithful followers throughout the age.

The Editor's foes have uniformly been those whose ambitions have led them step by step in their opposition. He blames them only partially for the evil they from time to time have sought to do to him and indirectly to the cause he serves and to some extent represents. His conviction is that the Great Adversary and his "wicked spirits in high places" are the real adversaries of the harvest work, who seek to use as many as they can gain control of through envy, or pride, through ambition or vainglory. Our Master forewarned us saying, "It must needs be that offenses come." The Apostle endorsed the same sentiment when he said, "There must needs be divisions amongst you that the approved may be made manifest." Again, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that the Lord permits reproaches to come upon his cause today, as he did in times past, for the purpose of making the Truth unpopular, to the intent that only those who love the Truth above all else and who are fully consecrated to its

service should be willing to bear the reproaches which the Adversary would be permitted to bring against the Lord's cause and those who stand prominently connected with it.

To all such we say, Be of good courage, God hath not cast off his people and never will. The trials and difficulties of the journey will all be understood fully, completely, when we reach the end of the way. Our Father planned it all--the narrow and rugged way by which the Master and his "little flock" of faithful followers shall finally reach the heavenly goal. Then, perfect through sufferings, copies of God's dear Son, they shall share with him in the glorious work of dispensing the blessing of life to all the families of the earth. So high a calling by so gracious a God is worthy of our love and loyalty even unto death. Faithful is he who has called us, who assures us that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able and has promised us that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God--the called ones according to his purpose." The Editor sorrows especially because he is the unwilling agent of suffering to so many of the Lord's dear flock, whereas it has usually been his privilege and endeavor to bestow comfort and to scatter blessings on every hand to the extent of his ability. "If one member suffers all the members suffer with it."

page 149

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

At the beginning of another day a very earnest, fervent prayer has reached our heavenly Father's listening ear in your behalf, that he may be especially near you in these days of the bitter cup of experience. Dear Brother, our hearts ache for you--(the shameful slander, why permitted?) But I know your loving heart would answer, "My Father planned it all." We do love you, dear Brother, more than we can ever tell this side of the vail, and try to appreciate in some measure at least the labor bestowed for us. Sister S_____ joins with me in sending these few lines. Mother wishes to be especially remembered to you with much love and sympathy.

Yours in him, A. R.--Illinois.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

May the richest blessing of the Lord be yours to comfort and sustain you in the hours of trial. We know you are his servant, giving meat at this time to the household of faith, so we also know that this terrible time of testing which has come to you can only result in his glory, your good and the good of all who

are with you in the Truth. Through the wicked do come

page 150

upon you "to eat up your flesh" they will stumble and fall, for the Lord is your light and your salvation, so whom have you to fear? We are praying for you and believing in the integrity of your Christian character, and even though false witnesses may rise up against you, we trust you and know that you will be brought off more than conqueror. Personally I am joyfully thankful each day for the light my heavenly Father sent me through you.

Sincerely yours in the Truth, with Christian love,
S. H.--West Virginia.

R3775 : page 150

MY DEAR BROTHER:--

I notice through the secular press that your enemies have again assailed you. I take this opportunity of extending you my heartfelt sympathy and of assuring you of my unshaken confidence in your integrity and Christian character. Praying that heaven's richest blessings may attend your every step, I am

Your Brother in the Lord (Isa. 54:17),
J. S.--Illinois.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Knowing that the great Adversary is just now seeking to injure you in the eyes of them that believe not, and knowing that no tribulation for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous, I take this opportunity of telling you of my deep sympathy and love for you in this hour. I am persuaded that this will neither move you nor any whose hearts are set on things above. What can separate us from the love of God! With deep sympathy and assurance of my Christian love for you, I am as always,

Your Brother in Christ,
J. W. S.--Ohio.

page 150

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

We have just learned, through the New York newspapers, of the severe trials that have recently come upon you. We hasten to assure you of the continued love of the friends here, and of our heartfelt sympathy. You do not need to be reminded of the fact that all

over this world the prayers of God's consecrated people are being offered up continually in your behalf. We as members of the one body all suffer together.

Recent TOWER articles seemed to indicate that you felt that trials were approaching. I had begun to marvel over the free course with which the Truth has been progressing of late and wondering how long such favorable conditions would continue. Therefore we are not surprised over these fiery trials as though some strange thing had happened, but are inclined to accept them as the to-be-expected or looked-for things.

May our heavenly Father's blessings be with you and all the dear ones increasingly is the true and earnest prayer of

Yours in the service of the Master,
BRO. AND SR. H. C. R.,--New York.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

In this time of your severe trial and affliction, we desire to express to you our heartfelt sympathies and to assure you that you have lost none of our esteem and love. We pray for you, dear brother, and ask that the Lord will strengthen you and bring you off more than conqueror. Again assuring you of our love and sympathy, we beg to subscribe ourselves,

Your brethren in Christ,
H. B. C., B. M. C.,--Washington, D.C.

R3775 : page 150

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

May the God of all comfort comfort you with these words: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." (Deut. 33:27.)

"Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."--Isa. 41:10.

There was a time when storms of trouble, threatening destruction to earthly joy, burst in fury upon me. I thought my heart would break. I cried out, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful." Sister T_____ repeated these precious words to me and I was comforted: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee." (Isa. 43:2.) God was true to his Word. I was uninjured and my faith was greatly increased.

Tressie and Laurice join me in sending Christian love and sympathy to you, and we would assure you of our perfect confidence in you as the servant whom God

has chosen to give the "meat in due season to the household."

Sincerely, your sister in Christ, C. M. E.,--Ohio.

page 150

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

I have never taken much of your time, but am going to intrude just a little now. I do this to assure you of my personal love, and continued faith and trust in your honor, integrity and purity of life and conduct as a man, and besides this I have the fullest confidence in you as that servant whom the Lord has so highly honored as to place him as steward over the truths now due the "household of faith." Not in the least has my faith been shaken by the events lately transpiring.

You may rest assured that we who know you best will but the more besiege the "throne of the heavenly grace" that you may be granted an unusual supply of help and strength, so that even this severe trial may but increase the work of preparing you and all the Church for the Kingdom honors and glory. While we know we cannot enter into the secret recesses of the heart with you, we do want you to know that your sufferings are in a sense ours, and we want you to know that we share them joyfully.

With kindest regards and Christian love, your brother in Christ, J. T. J.,--Virginia.

R3775 : page 150

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

We deeply sympathize with you in this hour of persecution, but are comforted with the thought that it has been written and is everywhere shown that the Lord knows how to take care of his own. No doubt many things scandalous and untrue will be published, but

"Truth crushed to earth
Will rise again.
The eternal years of God are here;
But error falling writhes in pain
And dies amidst its worshipers."

Again these words come to us: "All who would live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution, and we are determined that nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ our Lord; not even bitter persecution, famine, peril or the sword. We will not forget to pray for you.

Your brother and sister in the faith,
A. & C. G.--Mississippi.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

We spent the morning in mingled thought, prayer and sympathy, and we both wish to remind you that all our people know your character and the fruits that your life has brought forth in abrupt contrast to the fruits of selfishness on the side of your opponent. "By

R3776 : page 151

their fruits ye shall know them," said our beloved Master. God had not forsaken him. He has not forsaken you. He never will forsake you--you have his own Word for that! "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward." Never was there a more applicable expression than is that to your especial case! Also the beautiful text from Brother Paul for April 28 ("Heavenly Manna") and your own beautiful and fitting comment upon it--the text for tomorrow and that for the following day also. What a comfort these must be to you--and how I praise the dear heavenly Father that it is so!

Dear Brother Russell, what a magnificent joint-testimony is yours for the asking, or for the willingness to receive it from us publicly--from all your colporteurs in the field and from your own household, if we may by some means have the great privilege of making it known. Tell me, if you need or desire mine, how it may best be given in order to be of the greatest help to you.

I want to try to thank you for the wonderful and beautiful sermon of last Sunday, "Risen With Christ." It seems to me that every sermon is the most beautiful one I ever read or heard, but oh, this one appealed to me so deeply! My "heart burned," as did the disciples' hearts on the way to Emmaus, as Jesus talked with them. Truly, as you say in closing, "So many of us as can see this glorious plan have a blessing and a privilege which is hidden from the eyes of many others!" How glad I am that through yourself this great blessing and privilege is mine.

"The Lord bless thee and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace."

With the very deepest love and sympathy, your least sister in Christ, E. G.,--West Virginia.

=====

R3776 : page 151

A STONE OF STUMBLING.

"HE shall be for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence...to them that stumble at the Word, being disobedient."--I Pet. 2:8.

"Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you; as though some strange thing happened unto you."--I Pet. 4:12.

"Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."--2 Tim. 3:12. "The disciple is not above his Lord."--Matt. 10:24.

"Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated [enlightened], ye endured a great conflict of sufferings: partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion on me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your valuables, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward."--Heb. 10:32-35.

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"--Mark 15:34.

"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the pastor and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass that in all the land two parts shall be cut off and die [(1) the little flock of self-sacrificers and (2) the 'great company' of Rev. 7:14]. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined."--Zech. 13:7-9.

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."--Lam. 1:12.

"He was led as a lamb to slaughter. As a sheep before shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" [in resistance].--Isa. 53:7.

"It pleased the Lord to wound him, to put him to shame."--Isa. 53:10. "Many were astonished at thee."--Isa. 52:14.

"And Pilate answered, What evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, Crucify him! Crucify him!"--Mark 15:14.

"And Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all over me except it were given thee of my Father in heaven."--John 19:11. "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"--John 18:11.

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."--Isa. 53:3.

"As he was, so are we in this world."--I John 4:17.

"Marvel not if the world hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but now ye are not of the world because I have chosen you out of the world; therefore the world hateth you."--John 15:18,19.

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven."--Matt. 5:11,12.

"If one member of the body suffers all the members suffer with it. Now are ye the body of Christ and members in particular."--I Cor. 12:26,27.

"Count it all joy when ye fall into divers trials." (Jas. 1:2.) "Our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh out for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. 4:17.) "You who are troubled rest with us."--2 Thess. 1:7.

"God gave Christ to be the head over the Church which is his body." (Eph. 1:22,23.) "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:12.) "If we be dead with him we shall also live with him." (Rom. 6:8.) "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the

R3776 : page 152

mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (2 Pet. 5:6.) "Filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."--Col. 1:24.

"The reproaches of them that reproach thee are fallen upon me." (Rom. 15:3.) "Let us go to him without the camp bearing the reproach with him."--Heb. 13:13.

=====

R3776 : page 152

"ASHAMED OF ME AND MY WORD."

--LUKE 9:26--

ONE of the first thoughts to strike us in connection with this text is that our Lord so highly exalts and honors his Word as to put it on a parity with himself. We are not at all surprised at his declaration that those who are ashamed of him he would be ashamed to own as his joint-heirs in the Kingdom--ashamed to own or recognize as of his Bride class. All that is what we should expect, and yet as we look about us how many we find that seem to be ashamed of the Lord. Some may be inclined to controvert this and say, "No Christian is ashamed of Christ; even the nominal Christians, the tares, are glad to own him Lord of all. The name of Jesus is no longer a name of shame and contempt. God has highly exalted him, and the whole world is coming to adore him more and more every day."

Let us not be too sure that this is the right thought, dear friends. Our own thought is that a certain ideality has been exalted before the minds of civilized people, and that to this ideality they bow and render praise. Our thought is that the real Christ has never had the love or

esteem of the world, and that he will not have it until in God's due time the true knowledge shall have filled the earth, and the clouds of ignorance and superstition shall have rolled away, and when the world in general shall have learned some of the great lessons which the time of trouble introducing the Millennial Kingdom will surely teach.

The Christ whom the Jews did not love or esteem or honor, but on the contrary crucified, was holy, harmless, separate from sinners. He was not wealthy, was considered a fanatic because of his loyalty to truth and righteousness, and because he gave his time and energy to loving services for his fellow-creatures and especially in providing spiritual nourishment for them. Therefore his brethren hated him and hid as it were their faces from him--in shame. (Isa. 53:3.) And hence it was decided that they could not be of the Bride class, and as a nation the Jews were cast off until the elect should be found.

The Lord is still present in the world in the flesh--in the flesh of his consecrated members--and the world in general still despises him as at first and as he foretold--"Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love its own." (John 15:18,19.) The world is still ashamed of Christ. Nominal Christians, nominal Spiritual Israel, are as much ashamed of him today as Natural Israel was ashamed of him

R3777 : page 152

eighteen centuries ago. When we consider that our Lord is represented by his members in the flesh we see that love for the brethren means love for the Lord, and hence as the Apostle states this is one of the great tests of our relationship to him and to the Father. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (I John 4:20.) "Love one another as I have loved you," is the recognized test of discipleship, and he therefore who is ashamed of the brethren is ashamed of the elder brother. He counts all the younger brethren as himself, saying, He that despiseth you despiseth me; he that rejecteth you rejecteth me and him that sent me.--Luke 10:16.

It may be a new thought to some that in despising the brethren they are despising the Lord; that in being ashamed of the brethren they are being ashamed of the Lord; and that thus they would be demonstrating that a wrong condition of mind and conduct prevailed: that they were not fit for the kingdom; that they had not reached the mark of perfect love; that they had not only not learned to love their enemies but had not even learned to love the brethren--those who are striving to walk in the footsteps of the Master.

ASHAMED OF THE LORD'S WORD

How the Lord's terms and conditions of discipleship do sift and test our very innermost thoughts! He does not address those who burn the Bible nor those who neglect to have a Bible in the house, nor those who neglect to read the Bible, nor those who fail to take their texts from the Bible, nor those who quote the Scriptures incorrectly when they do quote them, but those who in their hearts are ashamed of the Word of God and give evidence of that shame, that lack of appreciation, by their failure to take their stand in support of the Truth. Let us test ourselves, let us prove that we are not ashamed of the Lord, of the brethren or of his Word.

The Word of God is not merely the Bible, but it includes sermons, tracts, books, etc., in proportion as they contain and truly represent the message of God's dear Son. This brings the matter still more closely home, and it implies that we are not to be ashamed of any of the doctrines presented in the Bible, nor to be ashamed of any literature which in the Lord's providence has been prepared and which represents his Truth and expounds and illustrates it. The Lord would have a free-minded, open-hearted people, whose hearts would be so loyal to him and to the Truth which he represents that they would gladly surrender everything, even life itself, rather than in any measure impede its progress, rather than in any measure bring dishonor or discredit upon it. On the contrary, those who are not ashamed of the Lord and his Word, and who realize that there is nothing in them to be ashamed of, but on the contrary everything to rejoice in, to exult in, will seek to lift high the royal banner, to tell the good tidings of great joy to the extent of their ability,

R3777 : page 153

to cooperate with all others who are thus showing forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.--I Pet. 2:9.

Such are the Lord's jewels, whom in the end of this age he will garner in the Kingdom and ultimately associate with himself in the great and glorious work of the Millennial age, the uplifting and refreshing of all the families of the earth. Only those who so love the Lord and his Truth as to be willing, yea, glad to suffer reproaches on their account--only such will be counted worthy of the grand and glorious conditions, opportunities and privileges of the Millennial Kingdom.

=====

R3777 : page 153

TRIFLING WITH CONSCIENCE.

--MARK 6:14-29.--MAY 20.--

Golden Text:--"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess."--Eph. 5:18.

TRIFLING with conscience is one of the great dangers of our time, as it has been of all past time. Our lesson offers an illustration along this line, showing how Herod Antipas, King of Galilee and Berea, trifled with his conscience and was thereby ensnared into adultery and murder. Every intelligent person of experience can bear witness to the fact that sins usually creep on gradually. No one plunges instantly from purity into the depths of sin. There is a gradual beginning in which the voice of conscience is heard, and if it be heeded the calamity of gross transgression may be avoided, but unheeded its voice grows more and more faint, its influence in the control of life less and less potent, until, with conscience asleep, the outward course goes from bad to worse, and there is a rude awakening of the individual to find himself ensnared, a captive--perhaps a libertine or a thief or a murderer, or all of these, and apparently with no alternative except to go on in the same direction. How many who have reached such a lamentable state have wished in vain that they again had the opportunity that was theirs at first--of heeding conscience and taking the path of righteousness.

"THE SPIRIT OF A SOUND MIND"

The whole world has this experience to some extent, because, however depraved and fallen, as a race we are still not totally depraved;--there still remains in each sane mind an element of conscience, a measure of ability to discern truth from untruth, justice from injustice, right from wrong. Christians perhaps, at the beginning of their new life, have neither more nor less of this quality than the remainder of mankind, but having consecrated their lives to the Lord and his service they have the promised assurance that they are taught of God. Under this teaching their conceptions of right and wrong are clarified--they are less superstitious, less guided by impressions merely, and, instead, have the positive instruction of the divine Word whereby they may more clearly than before discern what is the right and what is the wrong. Still, conscience is the same; it has merely received enlightenment, and must not be any less alert in the Christian than in the worldly person.

On the contrary, backed with the spirit of a sound mind, backed with a consecration of their all to the Lord, and led by the exceeding great and precious promises of the Scripture, they have every reason for following the voice of conscience more carefully than ever. To the enlightened Christian, guided in judgment by God's revelation, the Bible, the voice of conscience becomes really the voice of God, and obedience to it is imperative. Any transgression of its commands is sure to bring disaster, more serious by far than any which could come to the natural man, because the Christian

has taken the advance steps and has received advance knowledge. To the Christian, therefore, the heeding of the voice of conscience may mean either eternal life or eternal death--the Second Death. And even amongst those who will attain the eternal life the Scriptures show us two classes--the "more than overcomers," the "little flock," who shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and the "great company."

All of this first class, we may be sure, have given earnest heed to the voice of conscience, and have willingly and gladly and promptly followed its guidance as the voice of the Truth, as the voice of the Lord speaking to them through his Word and his providences, leading them from grace to grace and from glory to glory until their final change in the First Resurrection. To the other class, viz., the "Great Company" of Revelation 7, conscience will also be the guide by which they will attain the blessing before the throne in the honors and blessings which the Lord will confer upon them as overcomers of the world. Why will conscience lead them to a lower plane, and the first-mentioned class, the little flock, to the higher plane of the divine nature? Not, we answer, because conscience as the Lord's representative will have led them differently, but because they have followed the voice of conscience less carefully, with less zeal, with less perseverance, with less appreciation of how much importance depended upon their following it.

HEROD'S CONSCIENCE TORMENTED HIM

The Herod of our lesson (Antipas) was the son of "Herod the Great," who slew the babes of Bethlehem in his endeavor to thwart the divine program. Palestine was directly under the control of the Roman emperors, and instead of perpetuating the Kingdom of Herod they partitioned it, and gave one quarter to his son, Herod Antipas, the chief figure in our present lesson. Herodias, a beautiful and ambitious woman, a descendant of Cleopatra, a granddaughter of Herod the Great, was ambitious to be a queen and married her oldest uncle, Philip, supposing that to him would fall the kingdom honors at the hands of the Roman emperor. But he was passed by and Antipas was made tetrarch (i.e., ruler of a fourth part of the kingdom). Herodias was greatly disappointed, and when Herod Antipas came to Rome to be invested with royal honors she arranged it that he should be entertained at his brother's house, her home, and improved the opportunity to entangle him with her personal charms, so that when he departed for his dominion she eloped with him.

Here we see the parting of the ways for two and how both took the wrong course: the Golden Rule and their

R3778 : page 154

instincts for righteousness should have hindered them. We cannot doubt that each had a voice of conscience at that time, to which both closed their hearts. The woman

had not only the ties of chastity but the obligations of her marriage covenant to assist her conscience and to strengthen her in the avoiding of the wrong. The man also had a conscience, and knew that in accepting the blandishments of his brother's wife he was violating his marriage covenant with his own wife; he must have known also that in violating the sacred hospitalities of a host, his entertainer, his brother, he was doing an unbrotherly act. Above all he had a sufficient knowledge of the Jewish Law to know that his conduct was heinous in the sight of God.

Coming to his home, accompanied by his niece, his brother's wife, as his paramour, a great scandal was raised throughout Palestine, as the people, instructed by the Law, recognized that their ruler was living in open violation of it. His proper wife, disheartened, crushed, in the presence of the usurper, obtained permission to remove from Galilee across the lake to another part of the domain, to another palace, Machaerus. She was the daughter of the Arabian king Aretas, and soon managed to return to her father's house. Aretas was very angry and threatened war.

HEROD, AND NOT OTHER RULERS, REBUKED

When John's ministry was at its height and he was rebuking sin in its every form, the question of Herod's conduct came up, and the great prophet roundly denounced the misconduct, saying that it was contrary to the Law that Herod should thus have his brother's wife, his own niece. The Greek text intimates that this was not said once merely, but rather as though it read, "John was saying"--was teaching continuously that there was wrong at the very head of the nation. As the Jewish nation claimed to be and was accepted as God's special kingdom and people, and professed to live under his special laws in every particular, John was probably within the proprieties of the case in denouncing a ruler of the Jews, while making no criticism of the other rulers of the earth not under divine law and covenant.

Nevertheless, we are to remember that Jesus made no comment along this line. Nothing in John's course should be construed as a special example of what we should do today in respect to public functionaries--in criticism of their lives and affairs. There is no nation today in the world which God has accepted in the same sense that he accepted the nation of Israel, no nation today that professes to be under discipline and guidance as was Israel then. Our Lord indicates our relationship to the world, saying, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." (Matt. 22:21.) The Apostle explains that in all matters that do not conflict with our own personal liberties and conscience we are to recognize the official position of those who are governing the world. Hence Christians of today are to judge themselves and to scrutinize the affairs of the Church and to purge out from their midst all leaven, but they are not to attempt to purge the world or to think of the world as being under their judgment now.

True, the Apostle says, "Know ye not that the saints

are to judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2.) But he evidently refers to the time when the saints shall be qualified as judges, when in the end of this age they shall be changed from mortal to immortal, from imperfect to perfect, and be like their Lord and associated with him in the judging and ruling of the world, which then will begin and extend to every nation and every member of Adam's race. They were to live peaceably, so far as possible, with all men, rendering homage to whom homage is due, reverence to whom reverence is due, but always, both publicly and privately, acknowledging our primary obligations everyway to the Heavenly Father and to his Son, our Redeemer.

HEROD CAST JOHN INTO PRISON

Herod's pride was stung by John's comments, and no doubt he feared that, unreproved, unchecked, this might lead to disorders in the realm. He settled the matter by putting John in prison. Nevertheless we read that he feared John, realizing that he was a righteous man--a man who was following his conscience in a right course to the best of his ability. There is even an intimation (vs. 19,20) that John's imprisonment was in part at least to protect him from the anger of Herodias, who desired to kill him, and who doubtless would not have hesitated to hire assassins who would be more bold to thus procure a large reward, in the expectancy that Herodias would intercede with the king and secure their release.

The intimation of the Greek is that Herod gave John the Baptist frequent hearings, listened to his arguments--that he heard him willingly but was much perplexed. (R.V.) Herodias evidently realized that her hold upon the king was endangered. She seems to have been a woman of practically no conscience. She had risked all for her present station, and now what would she not risk to maintain it? If John the Baptist's teaching should influence Herod to put her away she would be in worse condition than ever before--a reprobate, an outcast, without a name or home or anything. To such a mind such an outcome was not to be considered, and anything was to be undertaken that would stand in the way of such a danger.

Thus it has been with many others occupying less prominent places in the world's history: ambition has misled them, and pride has been the force which not only overruled the voice of conscience but ultimately made murderers of those who at first, when conscience began to reprove, would have been shocked at the very thought of such an outcome. So it is on a lesser scale with some: pride and ambition, perhaps operating in another direction, have led conscience a chase, until figuratively in a corner the deluded one has resorted to lies and slanders and assassinations of reputation, the very thought of which at first would have been repelled with horror. How necessary to heed the voice of conscience!

Look at Herod, too, how his failure to heed conscience led him step by step deeper into the mire. Notice how,

when he heard John and was perplexed, if he had followed conscience he still might have gone free; but failing to heed it he became more and more entangled, until the culmination recorded in this lesson was reached, until he murdered the Lord's prophet.

Herodias was on the lookout for a convenient occasion on which to entrap still further the man who was already

R3778 : page 155

under her power through neglecting the voice of his conscience. Days were precious to her; she knew not when the Prophet's words might take effect upon Herod's conscience; she believed that he had a little conscience, and that it was troubled to some extent. Her auspicious time came with Herod's birthday; she would encourage his vanity; she would help to arrange the preliminaries for making it a great day of festival; she would thus endear herself to Herod as the one who sought most his elevation before the world.

Herod had sent John away from Galilee to the palace at Machaerus, which was also a fortress. In so doing he was removing him from Herodias and her particular influence, and satisfying her also in that he was at a greater distance and would be less frequently seen by Herod. It is supposed that the feast was held at that palace fortress, that indeed Herod was there at that time preparing for the war with the king of Arabia, and that the gathering of the nobles of the land was in a measure a patriotic rally throughout the kingdom to assure himself of the favor and good will of all of his under lords and influential subordinates. Such festivals were attended by men alone, and bountifully supplied not only with food but also with beverages, as a result of which the whole company would become quite convivial.

Herodias knew the king quite well and was laying a trap for him. She knew that when he was surrounded by his nobles and princes whatever he promised he would feel bound to fulfil: she knew, too, that it was the custom of the time and country that, toward the conclusion of such a feast, dancing girls would appear in the midst clothed in transparent garments, and that under such circumstances it was customary for the king to give some present to the danseuse proportionate to his appreciation of her self-abandonment in the voluptuous dancing. Herodias prepared a surprise for them all: the dancing girls were usually from the lower classes--she would make a special impression upon all by sending her daughter, a princess, a granddaughter of Herod the Great, to perform this part. The woman's cunning shows at every step, and, her plans carried out exactly as she had arranged and hoped, the king and his nobles were taken by surprise, and the former said to the maiden, "Ask your gift and it shall be yours to the extent of one-half of my dominion." If we are inclined to think of this as an extravagant matter, let us remember that many a wealthy voluptuary has been similarly foolish, spending thousands and hundreds of thousands upon actresses and

other conscienceless women in our day.

THE CUNNING OF A SERPENT

Herodias kept the matter to herself--not even her daughter Salome knew of the price she expected to exact; the girl had merely been advised that when the king would

R3779 : page 155

ask her choice of a gift and had declared his willingness to give her one, she should withdraw to inquire of her mother what she should ask. Herod was astonished at the request for the head of John the Baptist. Unprincipled as he was, hard-hearted, without a conscience, sadly demoralized, he had never thought of murdering God's prophet. We read that the king "was exceeding sorry." To some extent evidently he began to realize that he had been entrapped. To a man of well-balanced mind, of properly guided judgment, the question would have been easily settled, but not so to one of Herod's character.

Whatever conscience Herod had, now got onto the other side of the question, and insisted that he had made oath and that an oath should not be broken; and that for a king to break his oath, made in the presence of his nobles, would imply that he was a man devoid of all principle and character, and that these courtiers could not rely upon him or any promises he would make to them in connection with the war about to be prosecuted. Hence we read that for his oath's sake and for the sake of those who were of the company, and we might add for pride's sake, Herod yielded, and as the request was one that should be met forthwith he sent the executioner at once to John. He thus showed his greatness as a king, his respect for his illustrious company, and his high standard of value for his oath and his authority and power as a king. Truly the Scriptures declare that many things that are highly esteemed amongst men are an abomination in the sight of God, and in proportion as God's people become possessed of his spirit, his mind, his disposition, the spirit of a sound mind, in the same proportion these things become an abomination to us.

JOHN THE BAPTIST VERSUS HEROD ANTIPAS

Two great characters on the page of history are before our minds: The Lord's prophet, of whom Jesus declared, "There hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist," and Herod Antipas, prominent in his day and black marked on the page of history for the past eighteen centuries. The one was a man of God, whose life and time and all were consecrated to the service of his Maker, to the promulgation of righteous principles, to exhorting his fellow creatures to abandon sin and to follow righteousness: the other enthroned in power, with great possibilities of influence for good or evil, used those opportunities injuriously to himself and contrary to every principle of righteousness and

every good influence upon the people over whom he held a brief authority. The one used up his life in the preaching of the truth, suffered imprisonment and then beheading; the other lived a luxurious life of self-gratification amongst the plaudits of men, and had the power to take the life of the other. What will the harvest be?

Can any one who believes in a God, and trusts to the fulfilment of his promises respecting a future life, doubt that there will be a wide distinction between these two men in the future? Can any one who understands the divine plan doubt that John the Baptist, faithful until death, will be one of the princes whom the Lord of glory will appoint in the future for the guidance and direction of the world's affairs and for the uplift of the groaning creation? To such sterling characters the Lord can entrust much of his work, and we, perceiving the Lord's selection for the same, can have all the greater confidence in the grand outcome of that work in God's due time. But what shall we expect for Herod and others of his class, who have violated their consciences and degraded themselves and misused their opportunities for evil instead of for good? We must surely expect that they will be beaten with many stripes, that they will have punishments --not eternal torment, thank God, but, as the Scriptures

R3779 : page 156

declare, a just recompense of reward to every soul of man that doeth evil.--Rom. 2:9.

In proportion as Herod had great opportunities and defiled and degraded his conscience, in the same proportion, undoubtedly, he will awaken in the resurrection morning in a low condition morally, and proportionately will he have the more steps to retrace to God back to what he was at the beginning of his career, poor as that might have been. And still it will require further advancement, development, upward steps during the thousand years of the Millennial age to attain if he will in the end gain the perfection that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary.

"SHAME AND LASTING CONTEMPT"

The violation of conscience and the abuse of power practiced by Herod and Herodias have made them infamous throughout the world. The Scriptures assure us that in God's due time, during the Millennium, they with the remainder of Adam's family will as a result of Christ's redemptive work come forth from the tomb. Through the prophet Daniel the Lord has pictured the mass of mankind as awakening to shame and lasting contempt, and these two, we may be sure, will have special shame and contempt along with Nero and other horrible characters of history. By the time they are awakened, we may presume that the whole world will have reached a fair degree of development and progress toward perfection.

The knowledge of the Lord will be world-wide and ocean deep, and the human mind will have expanded proportionately,

so that the misdeeds of this pair will be more intensely abhorred than at present, except by the saints. It will be a heavy burden upon the guilty ones as they face the knowledge of the world respecting their reprobate course. They will feel like sinking through the earth from very shame. Moreover, the violations of conscience and degradation therefrom will serve to keep them longer in this detestable condition than they might otherwise remain--their progress toward perfection will be the slower on this account, and hence their measure of shame and contempt the greater and the more prolonged.

We thank God, however, that through Christ there is forgiveness of sins even for the vilest, and that these, who never heard of Christ in the true sense of the word, but whose minds were thoroughly blinded and degraded by sin under the influence of the god of this world, will ultimately reach enlightenment, and that learning of the grace of God through Christ they will have an opportunity of laying hold upon his mercy and receiving an uplifting blessing that gradually will deliver them from their shameful condition and from the contempt of fellow creatures--or, failing to use this mercy and these privileges and thus proving themselves unworthy of any of God's favors, they will die the death--the Second Death. We must remember in this connection our Lord's promise that it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom and Gomorrah than for Capernaum and other cities of Galilee, and so we presume it will be more tolerable for the King of Sodom than for King Herod. And yet, withal, the Lord's blessed provision is such that his arrangements for even the worst of mankind in general will not be intolerable. Everything that can be done for their recovery from sin and death we may be sure will be done.

=====

R3779 : page 156

HE GIVETH FOOD TO THE HUNGRY.

--MARK 6:30-44.--MAY 27.--

"My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven."--John 6:32.

THE twelve apostles had returned from the mission work to which the Lord sent them two by two. No doubt there was a fixed time for their return and Capernaum was probably the rendezvous. The presence of Jesus and his apostles caused commotion amongst the people, because by this time our Lord's fame was generally spread abroad. At Jesus' suggestion the twelve went with him to a country place that they might have quiet for the discussion of their affairs--their experiences on their mission, and the lessons Jesus wished to emphasize in connection with their experiences. Our Lord intimated, too, that the rest would be beneficial to them. Is not the same lesson applicable to us today?

Ours are strenuous times of great activity, mental and physical. The Lord's people, busied with the common activities of life, endeavoring to provide things needful, honest, and endeavoring also to tell the good tidings and show forth the praises of the Master and to proclaim his presence, have special need to heed the words, "Come ye yourselves apart in a desert place and rest awhile." Many of us enjoyed a brief season of resting and refreshment at last year's conventions, especially at the one held at Niagara Falls. But still the rest feature hardly seemed to be sufficiently emphasized even there. Hence we are planning for the present year two general conventions, with about the same number of meetings spread over about twice the number of days, giving better opportunity for fellowship, communion and rest. It is our experience that while these conventions cost those attending them considerable money, especially for railway fares, they nevertheless are sources of great spiritual profit and refreshment. Likewise the one-day conventions, though in a lesser degree and to smaller numbers. The Lord, we believe, is pleased that we should estimate spiritual strength, refreshment, grace, above financial cost. This, however, would not signify extravagance, wastefulness, neglect of duty nor the contracting of debt.

"ALL MEN WERE IN EXPECTATION"

But the people were hungry for the Lord's teachings, and noting the direction of the boat many went afoot and some ran so that they awaited the Lord upon the landing of the boat. Was the Lord angry that his endeavor for privacy and rest should be thus intruded upon by people for whom he had already done much? No! his heart was too full of sympathy for that. He looked about upon the people and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep having no shepherd. John the Baptist had been proclaiming the coming of God's Kingdom. Jesus had been giving parables illustrative of the Kingdom, which the people

R3780 : page 157

but imperfectly comprehended. The disciples, whom he had sent out two by two, had proclaimed repentance and preparation for the Kingdom. King Herod, living wickedly, had gone the length of beheading John, one of the greatest of the prophets, and subsequently he had been at war with King Aretas of Arabia, the father of his deserted wife. His army had been defeated and there was considerable turmoil and excitement amongst the people. They wondered as to what might be the outcome of these disturbances, when and how the Kingdom of God would be established. They questioned as to whether or not Jesus were truly the Messiah and would shortly announce himself as the king, and call for volunteer soldiers, etc., etc. Evidently the people were becoming greatly worked up on the subject, and we know that it was only a few days after this that Jesus withdrew from the public ministry in that vicinity for awhile, lest the people

should take him by force and make him a king--contrary to the divine plan and our Lord's program.

Although desiring rest our Lord could not forbear to teach the people. He was the true Shepherd and ready at all times to fulfil his mission, to lay down his very life for the sheep--not merely at Calvary but hourly, daily, during the years of his ministry while he was approaching the grand climax of his sacrifice. This must be the spirit of all who are the Lord's true disciples--increasingly so as they become partakers of the Master's holy Spirit, by feeding upon his Word and following his directions, growing in grace and knowledge and love.

"THY KINGDOM COME"

Today many of the Lord's people in Babylon are in a similar condition--easily persuaded that we are living in remarkable times, that some great dispensational change is about at hand. Many have heard something respecting the Millennial Kingdom being nigh, even at the door, and are wondering how, when, why, where it will be established. Looking to the political leaders they see more or less of confusion, hear of wars and rumors of wars, and the voice of Socialism proclaiming a general overturning of matters in the very near future. They note an impending time of trouble between capital and labor, and they long for information, for leading, for guidance, as to what should be their proper course. They are as sheep having no shepherd.

True, there are many shepherds in Babylon, but in proportion as they notice that these are leading toward infidelity, toward higher criticism of the Bible and evolutionary theories, they fear such leading, they lack confidence in it. They know not to whom they should look. The most satisfying portion that reaches their ears is the message of the Kingdom as we proclaim it, and yet they fear to accept this in the face of the denunciations and anathemas of their shepherds, who in a measure control them through fear, superstition and priestcraft. Every member of the body of Christ should remember that he is an ambassador for the Lord and should be glad to be used as his mouthpiece in proclaiming the good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, and in helping lead the sheep in the right way toward the true Shepherd.

Not that we can hope to influence all who are in a measure hungry: evidently only a little flock will be in that condition of heart where they will heed not the voice of strangers, but will follow the voice of the Son of God--the voice of the Truth. Nevertheless, like the Master, we should be compassionate toward all, rejoicing that those who cannot hear distinctly in the present time will hear unequivocally very shortly, when the Kingdom shall be established and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth.

"TAUGHT THEM MANY THINGS"

We should take a lesson from the Master's example. There were many things that he could teach even to the multitude that would be to their advantage, to their comfort, and serve as a preparation for their development, so that they would by and by be prepared for the deeper things. To his twelve apostles, and those who were his specially consecrated disciples, he had still other things to tell, saying, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God: but unto them that are without these things are done in parables." (Mark 4:11.) And yet even to the disciples there were certain things better left unsaid, as our Master intimated: "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now"--"the spirit of truth shall guide you into all truth."--John 16:12,13.

So the Apostle says, we may talk of the deep things of God, the wisdom of God hidden in mysteries, to those who are advanced in the knowledge of him and those prepared in heart for the deeper truths. We are to be especially on guard against choking the babes in Christ with the strong meat; but nevertheless we are not to allow them to starve, but to give them the milk of the Word that they may grow thereby. Let us remember our Lord's words as well as his example: he said, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Doubtless every one who reads these words can realize that in the beginning of his efforts to serve the Lord and his cause he did more injury than good because of unwisdom, indiscretion, a failure to take heed to the instructions of the Lord, a failure to follow his example of giving milk to babes and strong meat to men.

From an account given in another of the Gospels it seems evident that after teaching the people our Lord left them for a time and went with his disciples apart on the hillside, where they reviewed their ministries. Doubtless, also, they had opportunities for such fellowship and recounting on the boat on the journey. It would appear to have been later in the day, in the afternoon, that he came down from the mountain and that the crowds already there were augmented by large caravans, which at this time were en route for Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover, the whole multitude numbering several thousand. Apparently the newcomers were full of questions and interest and our Lord gave forth teachings and expositions.

"GIVE YE THEM TO EAT"

The night was coming on and the disciples urged that the Lord should disperse the people, but he had a purpose which they knew not of--he had in mind one of the greatest miracles of his entire ministry. However, instead of telling them of it, he allowed the matter to come about in the most natural way, suggesting to them that they should seat the multitude and he would assist them in their helplessness.

R3780 : page 158

He inquired what food they possessed, and a lad with four

barley loaves and two small fishes was found--next to nothing. This served our Lord's purpose, however; he wished to show his willingness to cooperate in the work of blessing the multitude, and thus he illustrated a general feature of his dealings with his people and with the world. He takes our time and talents, little and unworthy as these are, and blesses them and uses them in his service and accomplishes great things. He thus associates his people with himself, and blesses them by these experiences and lessons even more than he blesses those to whom he sends them with his mercies, temporal and spiritual.

The disciples had learned to be obedient in respect to whatever the Master would propose; hence we find no objection offered to the Lord's command that they apparently make themselves foolish in the sight of the people by bidding them sit down in a hundred companies of fifty to prepare for a feast when apparently no feast could be spread for them. They were beginning to learn that he who could fill their nets with fish, who could awaken from the sleep of death, who could restore withered hands and heal without a touch by a word, was so different from themselves as to be beyond the power of their judgment or criticism. They obeyed; the Lord did the rest.

BLESSING THE BREAD

Our lesson says that the Lord blessed the bread; John's Gospel recounting the same matter says, "He gave thanks." The two thoughts are in close agreement--the giving of thanks to God brought indeed a blessing upon the food. We pause here to suggest that if it was appropriate that the Only Begotten of the Father should render thanks for that frugal meal and should ask the divine blessing upon it, it is certainly becoming that any who in any sense of the word profess to be his followers should copy his example in this as well as in other things. How can we partake of food, recognizing that it is of God's bounty and provision, without returning our thanks or acknowledgments? We feel sure that all who do render thanks receive special blessing with their food and upon it, and a special wisdom in respect to the use of it that others fail to get. The very peace and rest of heart which comes as a result of looking to the Lord in gratitude, and accepting his provision with thankfulness, by natural law insures a tranquillity which is favorable to the digestion of the food. Undoubtedly food which is eaten in a pleasant and thankful attitude of mind is more nourishing, more refreshing, than the same food if eaten in unthankfulness or anger or with feelings of dissatisfaction.

R3781 : page 158

Notice also that the feast for which our Lord returned thanks was not a sumptuous one; it was not served in elegant, decorated ware; it was not fine food; it was plain barley bread and dried fish. As we think of the simplicity of the diet of our Lord's day and of that of the people of oriental

countries still, and as we consider the food furnished to the Japanese army and the usual food of the Japanese family, we get the lesson that both in quantity and in quality many people of our day are overfed and perhaps not benefited thereby--that plainness and simplicity of food would not only be more healthful, but would leave much more time for the spiritual refreshment, the bread from heaven, and the service of the Truth to others. Each should consider this matter and act upon it according to his circumstances and the interests and preferences of others, which he is surely bound to consider.

One lesson, however, all can appropriate, namely, that gratitude to God is appropriate however simple our bill of fare. It would be our hope that so far as possible the readers of this journal in their family associations are not neglectful of this privilege of giving thanks--to the extent that they are the persons having properly the authority or conduct of the family's affairs. It would be, of course, inappropriate for a stranger or a visitor to intrude upon the customs of the family, nor can we think that it is always appropriate to openly manifest our thankfulness to the Lord when at public tables, at hotels, restaurants, etc. We might be pleased to thus acknowledge the Lord, but might well refrain if our conduct would be misapprehended as Pharisaism. In such cases, however, the heart should always render thanks--even if no outward sign or word should indicate it to those about us--before a mouthful of food be taken.

THE DISCIPLES GAVE TO THE PEOPLE

Other accounts show us that as the Lord broke the food he distributed it to his disciples, they in turn carrying it to the multitude. How gracious of the Lord to so arrange matters! The disciples were thus the better witnesses of the power of the miracle, and the people were more or less made acquainted with the apostles, who perhaps later on, after Pentecost, met many of them, and, as the Master's representatives, bore to them the heavenly bread. It is still the same, for the Lord will find and will feed and will strengthen those who are his, for "the Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Tim. 2:19.) He is not at all dependent upon us for the carrying of the Present Truth to the hungry multitude, but for our advantage he has given us the privilege of becoming co-laborers with him. How we should appreciate it! How eager we should be that any little barley loaves we may possess, any little fishes, any dollars and dimes, any shillings and pence, any time and influence, might be used of the Lord in his blessed work!

While such a course on our part is in the Scriptures dignified by the name of sacrifice, yet really, to those who understand the situation properly, it is the very reverse, a blessing, a privilege, a favor. We are glad to note that this privilege is so highly esteemed by those who are now rejoicing in the Present Truth. It is a matter of continual wonder to the enemies of the Truth, as well as to the slightly interested, that means seem never lacking for the promulgation

of the harvest message, and that without resorting to appeals to the world through festivals, fairs, etc., without importuning the Lord's people by requests for money or any collection baskets--the Spirit of the Lord seems to accompany the Truth, so that those who have the Truth and have talents of any kind for the Lord's service rejoice with joy unspeakable to have these used, giving thanks to the Master for the privileges they enjoy.

"ALL ATE AND WERE FILLED"

It was not merely a taste of food that the Lord provided, but a satisfying portion--all had plenty. We may reasonably suppose, however, that a meal consisting of barley bread and dried fish would not be partaken of as liberally as if condiments, spices, sauces and preserves, sweets, etc.,

R3781 : page 159

had been supplied. Perhaps nature with us all would act more reasonably, so we would know when we had enough, if we lived more upon the plain substantial of life, and did not too much pamper our appetites and encourage ourselves to eat beyond the point of proper satisfaction of hunger.

That great multitude in some respects pictures the world during the Millennial age. Those who now follow the Lord as his special disciples will then be supplied abundantly by the Master with the bread of eternal life and will be privileged to distribute it to all the families of the earth. They will all have the opportunity of being filled, refreshed, strengthened. As we see how much the world lacks in this matter now, our hearts rejoice to know of the abundance of God's provision for the future and of the share we shall have in co-laboring with our Redeemer in the distribution of it to every creature, that all who will may take of the water of life freely and eat of the bread of life to their satisfaction. It was on the day after this miracle that our Lord gave his discourse on the bread of life.--John 6:26-58.

GATHERING UP THE FRAGMENTS

It would strike us as rather severe economy that the Lord should send his apostles to gather of the leavings of the feast from the multitude. It would be rather severe economy to oblige the faithful twelve to subsist upon the scraps that had been fingered by five thousand people. It seems much more reasonable to suppose that the small fragments left by the multitude were allowed to go to the birds and squirrels, and that the fragments gathered by the apostles were those broken by our Lord. As he broke the loaves and fishes they multiplied exceedingly, so that he supplied and resupplied the disciples with the food, while they carried it to the multitude, and that a sufficiency remained beside for our Lord to fill the twelve baskets with food that was good and clean and in every way suitable for further use.

The lesson of economy is appropriate to us all, but in

our experience the poorest of the world and of the Lord's people often have greatest need for this lesson. While the Lord had abundance of power to create, he would have his disciples note the principle of economy and practise it. His wealth of power should not be a cause of extravagance on the part of any who are his. Extravagance in any matter seems much out of place in any that are our Lord's followers. If we have more than we need are there not others who have less than they need? If we have the Spirit of the Master we will have the spirit of helpfulness and generosity, and that increasingly as we come more and more into his character-likeness.

The same lesson seems to come to us in connection with the harvest work. We sometimes say to ourselves, "While our Lord is rich why should any of his followers be poor?" Undoubtedly it must be to our advantage that the Lord provides apparently just what is needed for his work and no more. The lesson in this parable is that he desires to give us, his followers, opportunities for sacrificing in connection with his service, and thus to bless us and to enable us more and more to appreciate our privileges. Perhaps, too, if the harvest work were blessed with wealthy friends and abundance of money this would foster more of a worldly spirit, more of pride and outward display, which would be disadvantageous to the cause and unfavorable for our own development. Let us be content with such things as we have, with the plain bread and fish, with our Lord's blessing. Let us take heed to the fragments, too, that we may render up a faithful record of our stewardship, that we may see to it that the talents entrusted to us have not been buried in the earth, but have been used to the best of our ability to the glory of our King.

As our Golden Text declares, we are to give our Father in heaven thanks for every good thing, including the bread of life--including Jesus, the salvation which he provides, and the Kingdom blessings which are coming through him and the privileges of association with him. All things are of the Father, and all our favors are by or through the Son. Gratitude is one of the smallest returns imaginable: it leads on to perfect love, which includes a self-sacrificing spirit.

=====

R3781 : page 159

A MESSAGE FROM THE SAN FRANCISCO FRIENDS.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Your kind favor of 25th ult. is before me, just received, and I hasten to reassure you as to the safety and reasonably good health of all the dear ones in our assembly in and around San Francisco--a majority of whom were privileged to attend our usual service on the 29th at the usual hour. We surely can rejoice in having been all so miraculously spared and having lost

nothing but a few hours of inconvenience and in one case their earthly belongings.

In the name of our Church I desire to thank you all for your kind and brotherly interest in our welfare, and will state that there is no need at present of any material or financial assistance, but if it should become necessary in the near future I will gladly avail myself, on behalf of our dear ones, of such from your dear generous hearts and hands, but at present we are all well provided for. It was my intention to advise you concerning the welfare of our Church before this, and the omission was caused by the necessity of writing so many letters in answer to inquiries from so many different places and in seeking after those of our number who resided in San Francisco, so pardon my negligence.

This calamity has caused many thousands, like myself, to be without employment--not only the actual

R3782 : page 159

residents of the stricken city, but those who resided in the cities around the Bay, and what will result from it remains only to be seen by waiting and exercising patience and faith in God. It is impossible for any but those who have witnessed the effects of this catastrophe to conceive how complete was the destruction of what every one must confess was a wicked city. Brother Owen and myself viewed the ruined city from an eminence that gave us a complete view of both the burned and unburned districts. My estimate is that two-thirds of the city was destroyed, while Brother Owen thinks four-fifths was destroyed; but in either estimate it is very bad. What the suffering and inconvenience of many have been and will be for a time can only be surmised.

We can, all of us here, thank God for this object lesson, and the strengthening effect it has upon each one of us, as does every experience in life, and, as you say, assists us in recognizing in this the near approach of the Kingdom which shall forever end such calamities and afflictions.

Your brother and servant in Christ,
H. M. FITCH,--California.

=====