

THE PEACE OF GOD

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of July 1, 1895, which please see.]

WHY THERE IS DIVERSITY AMONGST GOD'S PEOPLE

"Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?"—1 Cor. 4:7

While it is true that all men are born with inalienable rights and privileges, yet no man is born without sin. The Scriptures very properly declare that the race in Adam was sold under sin six thousand years ago. In this sense, therefore, we were not born free, but slaves of sin. Neither are we born equal. No two persons are exactly alike in opportunity, talent and ability. We differ from one another. God did not create some better and some worse—some more richly endowed and some less richly endowed. We are to take the Bible statement of the origin of humanity, and understand that God made Adam perfect. All the imperfections which encumber the human race are the results of the dying process. Sin has made us all to differ, then, from the original image and likeness of God. Satan brought about this difference through Mother Eve.

In our text, however, the Apostle Paul has in mind a new creation in Jesus Christ—a new order—amongst whose members there is a difference. Some in the church have many talents, others, few talents; some have special talents, others have ordinary talents. But Satan is not charged with having given the greater or lesser talents to these. The Apostle says that it is God who has set the various members in the body as it has pleased him; and that both this setting, or apportioning, of the different members of the body and the bringing forth of the different degrees of fruitage are manifestations of God's grace in our hearts. Thus we are made to differ from each other.

CAUSE OF DIVERSITY OF ATTAINMENTS

The matter of growth in the holy Spirit is one that is dependent in large measure upon each one's zeal to know, to do, the will of God. We are put into the school of Christ to learn of him. Some learn more rapidly, others less rapidly. In proportion as they learn, they have greater opportunities and blessings. All are granted a measure of the holy Spirit—all granted some blessing. Those who are anxious to know the will of the Lord and to study it grow the more rapidly,

and thus have more of the holy Spirit. These are zealous to do the Lord's will. Their progress is not attributable wholly to themselves, but especially to the favor of God.

The Apostle goes on to say, Ye are God's workmanship; "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." We could not do this work ourselves. The power that is working in us is of God. He is preparing a glorious temple. He has provided who shall be the chief corner-stone of this temple, and who shall be the members of the temple class. We could not choose the place for ourselves. But in God's providence we each responded to the call to be a living stone. The stones were first cut out of the dark quarry, and now they are being shaped and prepared for places in the glorious building.

DIVERSITY OF ANOTHER KIND

The great Master-Workman is doing a work upon us. He is chiseling and fashioning us. He is making us what we are. Consequently there is to be no boasting. There is a certain amount of personality connected with each one, however, and if there is too much cross-grain in the stone it will be abandoned. As the Apostle Peter exhorts, we are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time. The same Apostle also reminds us that we should look up to God and give him praise for all that we have and are.—1 Pet. 5:6; 4:11.

We are collaborators with God. We give God the praise that he has made us to differ from our former selves, that he is making us thus to differ more every day, and that he will continue the good work as the days go by and as we seek to do his will. What have we of ourselves? Nothing! We were wholly dead through Father Adam's disobedience; we were born in this condition, having no right to everlasting life. But God has a plan which is world-wide in its scheme of blessing. He has proffered the blessings of the highest feature of this plan to us, and invited us to come to him in advance of the world. And this we receive through his grace.

DOCTRINES MORE OR LESS IMPORTANT

There are certain features of the doctrine of Christ which are fundamental and indispensable, and without which none would be recognized of the Lord as one of his followers. There are other features which would seem to be useful, helpful, blessed, but not fundamental—not essential to membership in the body of Christ. The fundamentals have been enjoyed by good, saintly ones from the day of Pentecost until now.

We, the same class now, have the same fundamentals, and are permitted to have other privileges, truths, "meat in due season," for our strengthening. These latter are not necessarily essential to our membership in the body of Christ; otherwise our forefathers who did not have them would not have been members of Christ, and there would have been no Christ body for centuries.

The fundamental theory of the Atonement is as follows:

- (1) All men—all of Adam's children—are sinners.
- (2) None can be reconciled to God without a Redeemer's sacrifice.
- (3) Jesus came into the world to be that sacrifice—and later to apply that ransom-price for the sins of the world.
- (4) On the basis of faith in the Redeemer's work, the believer may consecrate himself to the divine service, in acceptance of the divine invitation, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice."
- (5) So doing, the believer may—up to the time of the completion of the elect number—exercise full assurance of faith that his sacrifice will be accepted of the Father; and that he will receive a share of the anointing of the holy Spirit—the begetting.
- (6) Such as meet these conditions are to be accepted as brethren in the highest sense of the term. This much would seem to have been always necessary, and more than this we believe is not necessary today. But if by reason of our favorable day we have more knowledge, we may also have corresponding trials, which our greater knowledge will offset.

Our advice to the Lord's dear people everywhere is that

they put no yoke upon each other, beyond the fundamentals specified above—that otherwise they stand free, and leave each other free, and fellowship and agree as much as they can with each other.

If there be a disposition to crowd each other on more than this basic faith, and if it be considered necessary to separate in order to the progress of either of the parties, then doubtless rather than a continual contention a separation would be the wise course.

We are not criticising the views of any one. Each has a perfect right to hold whatever he believes the Bible to teach, and our views are doubtless well known to all of our readers. Briefly stated, they are as follows:

- (1) That the one that sinned was Adam, and that he and all his posterity were involved.
- (2) That a Redeemer was necessary, that Jesus became that Redeemer, and "gave himself a ransom for all."
- (3) That God has invited some of the redeemed sinners—not to be the ransom-price, nor to redeem anybody else, but—to be associates of the Redeemer, members of his body, his bride.
- (4) The terms and conditions upon which these may have fellowship are that Jesus as the great Advocate shall accept them as his members—their flesh as his flesh—and that he shall impute to them the share of his merit which would be coming to them as members of the Adamic race. Then they are legally justified from all the shortcomings, weaknesses and imperfections inherited by them; and their own wills and all their remaining powers and talents being consecrated, their sacrifice may be acceptable to God—as part of the sin-offering by the great High Priest.

(5) Sharing thus in the Redeemer's death, these are privileged to share in his life, by the first resurrection. The Redeemer does not now make application of his merit to the world, aside from the newly-accepted and added members. He will carry out the divine program, and sacrifice all his

members before presenting, at the end of the age, the merit of his sacrifice on behalf of the sins of the whole world, and will thereby seal the New Covenant for them.

In our judgment many err in attaching too much value to the church's sacrifice; whereas other dear brethren err, we think, in that they do not see any value in the church's sacrifice, nor that she is permitted a share in the Master's sacrificings at all. To us it seems like the swing of the pendulum from one extreme to the other; whereas our view lies in the

center, as we have stated the matter in our several publications.

If after fully considering these matters, a class finds that it cannot agree, and would make better progress as two classes, we would concur in that conclusion as a wise one, as much as we would deplore the necessity of a division. Such a separation would not necessarily alienate either class from the Lord's people, nor from the Society, because both acknowledge Jesus as their Redeemer, and both acknowledge that his blood is primarily efficacious.

GOD'S COVENANT AT MOUNT SINAI

AUGUST 31.—Exodus 19:1-6.

“Let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God, with reverence and awe.”—Hebrews 12:28. R. V.

Two months after the Passover deliverance, the Israelites arrived at Mt. Sinai, but on their way they had two valuable lessons respecting God's grace and power. When they reached the valley Rephidim, they were thirsty and found no water. Here Moses, in the name of the Lord, smote the rock with his rod, and from it gushed water, abundantly refreshing Israel at this time, and as a rivulet following them through much of their subsequent journey.

St. Paul, by inspiration, points out to us that that rock represented Christ, that the smiting of the rock represented the putting of Christ to a shameful death, but that only by this means is the Water of Life provided for those who desire to be the people of God. As the waters of that rock followed the Israelites, so the stream of God's favor, through the sacrifice of Christ, refreshes Christ's disciples throughout their wilderness journey.

Refreshed in body and in faith, Israel journeyed onward, but encountered new obstacles. The Amalekites, a warlike people, considered the coming of Israel as an invasion of their country, and attacked them in battle. A people used to peaceful pursuits, as the Israelites had for centuries been, would naturally be at a disadvantage in a conflict with such opponents. Yet God gave them the victory. He indicated, however, that it was not by their prowess or skill, but of his grace that they conquered.

Moses, stationed upon a high hill, lifted up his hands in prayer to God for the people. While he did so, success was theirs; but when he ceased thus to pray, the Amalekites were the victors. Perceiving this, Aaron and Hur assisted in holding up the hands of Moses until the battle terminated with success for Israel. God thus indicated that Moses was the advocate or representative of Israel, and that without him they could do nothing.

In the antitype, we realize that spiritual Israelites have conflicts with enemies too mighty for them without the Lord's assistance. The world, the flesh and the devil make common cause against all who are seeking the heavenly Canaan. We who are followers of Jesus have success in our warfare only as we have him as our Advocate—“We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.” Through him we may come off conquerors, yea, more than merely conquerors, victors in the highest sense—“through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.”

THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD PROFFERED

All of God's dealings with the Israelites were in accord with his great covenant made with Abraham, and certified with the divine oath—“In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Neither Moses nor any of those who followed him could possibly have understood the full import of this great oath-bound promise; for it is a double promise, the spiritual portion of which was hidden until God's due time—at the first advent. Even since then, St. Paul assures us, it is a hidden mystery, appreciated only by the very few. “The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant.”

The promise is divided into three parts: (1) Abraham himself (and all the ancient worthies, whom he represented) was to have a share; (2) Abraham's seed was to be the chief agent, or channel, of blessing; and (3) all the families of the earth were to be blessed as recipients of God's favor through these channels. But only by the light of the holy Spirit during this Gospel age are these lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Abrahamic covenant made manifest.

When inviting the Israelites to come out of Egypt, God did not explain the covenant to them nor tell them which portion they might have a share in. But when they had come to Mt. Sinai, God made inquiry as to whether or not they could keep the divine law, and thus prove themselves eligible to the highest favor included in that covenant.

In other words, the Lord said to them at Mt. Sinai, Are you ready now to enter into a covenant of full consecration to do my will? You have seen how I dealt with the Egyptians in delivering you. You have seen how, ever since then, I have borne you on eagles' wings over all the trials and difficulties of your journey to this place. Have you faith? Have you loyalty? Do you wish to enter into a covenant? “If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my commandments, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people . . . and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation.”

While the Israelites knew that they were the favored seed of Abraham, the natural heirs of the promises, it was proper that they should know also that they would be unsuitable for the Lord's use in blessing the other nations with his law unless they themselves were able to keep that law and to instruct others how to keep it. With this understanding, that they were ready to do the Lord's will and thus to be separated by him to be the kings and priests of the whole world, a Law Covenant was made with them, and Moses was appointed its mediator. Whoever would keep those commandments might live forever; and in proportion as he kept them he would be entitled to earthly favors.

TYPICAL OF NEW COVENANT

St. Paul, in Hebrews 12:18-24, points us to the antitype of today's Study. As Israel was delivered from Pharaoh and his hosts, so ultimately all mankind is to be delivered from Satan and his hosts, the fallen angels, and from all evil influences. As the journey to the Promised Land brought the Israelites to Mt. Sinai and the Law Covenant, so the journey of God's people will ultimately bring all the willing, obedient and faithful to the antitype of Mt. Sinai; namely, Mt. Zion, God's kingdom, for which Jesus taught us to pray, “Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.”

Meantime, Jesus has become the antitypical Moses and Leader of the people, and in harmony with Jehovah's program, he has been selecting the members, or associates and joint-heirs. St. Paul explains this to us, saying, “God gave Jesus to be the head over the church, which is his body.” St. Peter explains that this great antitypical Moses must be raised up from amongst the brethren first, before the blessing of restitution can come to mankind in general.—Acts 3:22, 23, 19:21.

This entire Gospel age has been devoted to the gathering of the members of the Christ body. And when the last member shall have made his calling and election sure, this age will end, and the more glorious work of the Messianic age will begin.

SHAKE HEAVENS AND EARTH

The antitype of our lesson will be the inauguration of the New Covenant, at the second advent of Jesus. The basis of this new and better covenant was completed at Calvary by our Lord's sacrifice of himself. He has since been completing his “better sacrifices” by presenting the bodies of his saints, holy and acceptable, to God (Rom. 12:1). Soon the “better sacrifices” will be completed, and the greater Mediator will have been fully raised up from amongst the brethren. Then everything will be ready for the inauguration of the New Covenant, to bless the world of mankind with knowledge, and with opportunity for restitution to earthly blessings and perfection.

St. Paul points out that this is what we are coming to—approaching—“the general assembly and church of the first-born,” whose names are written in heaven. He declares that we may expect an antitype of the stirring scenes mentioned in our lesson. As at Mt. Sinai the literal mountain shook, lightnings flashed, and the voice of God was heard as the sound of a great trumpet, so here the antitype will come.

The great trumpet here will be the seventh trumpet, the trump of God. The storm and tempest and shaking here in the antitype will mean the shaking of the ecclesiastical heavens and the social, political and financial earth.

The Apostle prophetically assures us that everything shakeable will be shaken to its destruction, that only the unshakeable things will remain. That is to say, the Messianic kingdom then to be established will completely overturn everything not in harmony with righteousness, justice and truth. This is merely a prelude to the great blessing of the Abrahamic

Covenant then to be fully ushered in, for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

THE HEIRS OF THE KINGDOM

The body of the spiritual seed of Abraham, of which Christ Jesus is the Head—his faithful, saintly followers—are now being tested as respects their worthiness for so high a station. St. Paul's words in our Golden Text are very forcefully applied to these: "Let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God, with reverence and awe."

DELIVERANCE

"Still o'er earth's sky the clouds of anger roll,
And God's revenge hangs heavy on her soul;
Yet shall she rise—though first by God chastised—
In glory and in beauty then baptized.

"Yes, Earth, thou shalt arise; the Father's aid
Shall heal the wound his chastening hand hath made;
Shall judge the proud oppressor's ruthless sway,
And burst his bonds, and cast his cords away.

"Then on your soil shall deathless verdure spring.
Break forth, ye mountains, and ye valleys, sing!

No more your thirsty rocks shall frown forlorn,
The unbeliever's jest, the heathen's scorn.

"The sultry sands shall tenfold harvests yield,
And a new Eden deck the thorny field.
E'en now we see, wide-waving o'er the land,
The mighty angel lifts his golden wand,

"Courts the bright vision of descending power,
Tells every gate and measures every tower;
And chides the tardy seals that yet detain
Thy Lion, Judah, from his destined reign."—Heber.

GOD'S TEN COMMANDS

SEPTEMBER 7.—Exodus 20:1-11.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind."
—Luke 10:27.

God's Covenant with Israel at Mt. Sinai was that if they should keep perfectly the Decalogue—the Ten Commandments—they would thereby demonstrate that they were perfect men, worthy of everlasting life. Then it would be possible for them to attain the chief blessing under the Abrahamic Covenant—to become the spiritual seed of Abraham, through whom God had promised that he would bless the world.

St. Paul represents to us the spirit of the worthiest of the Jews, who were anxious to do God's will and to obtain the blessing, as crying out in anguish of soul, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this dead body!" Their minds were certainly alive to the promises and prospects, but their flesh was imperfect, depraved through the fall—like that of all other people. "Ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. 5:17.

Bible students look in amazement at the simplicity of the Decalogue, and at first wonder which of its features the Jews and others were unable to perform fully, satisfactorily. The whole matter seems very simple indeed, just as it did to the Jews, until we perceive that the wonderful Law of God, represented by the Ten Commandments, has a depth of meaning not seen on the surface.

The lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the meaning of this law were apparently seen by none until Jesus "magnified the law and made it honorable." He says that hatred toward a brother is incipient murder, and that adulterous desire in the heart is a violation of the seventh commandment. This throws a new light on the whole matter, and explains to us why none of the Jews or Gentiles have ever been able to keep this law, except Jesus, since the fall of Adam.

The Great Teacher also explains that the first table of the law, appertaining to man's duties toward his Creator, means more than merely avoiding image worship and profane swearing. It means that the true God shall be recognized and have first place in the human heart. It means "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." Any division of the heart or strength or mind or soul violates this commandment.

GOD'S ORIGINAL LAW TO MAN

God's law to man was not originally given at Mt. Sinai. Indeed, the Mt. Sinai statement of the law was given not to mankind in general, but merely to the Jewish nation—as a statement of the terms upon which they might become God's royal priesthood for the blessing of all nations.

God's original law to man was given in Eden, when man was created. God's law was written in Adam's heart, in the sense that he was created in the divine image—with attributes of mind and heart fully in accord with his Creator. He loved righteousness, and would have had a hatred for iniquity, had there been any to hate. But up to that time there was none.

We marvel at the change that has come, under which the

children of Adam are not in God's image and do not love righteousness, but on the contrary, love sin. As the Prophet declares, "They go astray from the womb." He tells us where the change came in, saying, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalm 51:5.

After the fall of man, the work of degeneracy progressed so rapidly that Adam's first-born son, Cain, became a murderer. Doubtless the chagrin of Mother Eve in the loss of Eden, and in the battling with the thorns and thistles of the earth under the curse, embittered her mind, arousing anger and resentment, which marked her child. From then till now the course has been downward in general, with occasionally a well-born child less seriously marked by sin—less depraved. Still the Scriptures inform us that "there is none righteous, no, not one."

THE HOPE OF THE FUTURE

The experiences of the whole race for six thousand years forbid that we should expect that any could commend himself to God upon the terms of human perfection and of ability and willingness to keep the divine law. Jesus alone has kept that law, and he, because his life was not derived from Adam—because his life was from the Father directly. He became a man by a change of nature. Because thus begotten miraculously he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."

God refuses to grant everlasting life to any except the perfect, who will keep his law perfectly and gladly. What hope then is there for our race? There is one hope for the world in general, and another different hope for the church of Christ, instituted at Pentecost. The hope for the world is that God in his own due time will establish the Messianic kingdom. It will be a righteous kingdom, its rulers and judges being the royal priesthood.

This Messianic kingdom will begin by deposing the prince of this world, and binding him for a thousand years. Speedily the iniquities of earth will be set aside, and the rule of the "rod of iron" will begin. Everything opposed to righteousness will be dashed to pieces. Instead of darkness, ignorance, superstition, doubt and fear, will come in the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. Soon it will fill the entire earth. Under its influence everything sinful will be discouraged by chastenings, and everything righteous will be encouraged by rewards of blessing. The judgments of the Lord will be abroad in the earth, and the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.—Isa. 26:9.

As a result, soon every knee will be bowing to God and every tongue confessing his praise. But all of the wilfully rebellious, lovers of sin, will be destroyed in the second death—"everlasting destruction." Under that administration, the world will reach again the condition of human perfection from which Adam fell. The privilege to thus return to the image of God with his law rewritten in their hearts, was secured for all by the sacrifice at Calvary. "Jesus Christ,

by the grace of God, tasted death for every man."—Hebrews 2:9.

These all, being perfect again as Adam was at first, plus the experiences of good and evil gained during the seven thousand years, when finally approved of God will have everlasting life, nor be in the slightest danger of ever again mistakenly choosing sin as the road to happiness.

THE CHURCH AND THE LAW

The church of Christ is selected from mankind, who were born in sin. The members are not put under the law of Sinai in the sense of being required to keep it perfectly in order to get everlasting life. "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Romans 6:14) Nevertheless, the law is very precious to the church; for, looking at the spirit of it, she sees what she ought to be if perfect, sees what she ought to strive for to the best of her ability, sees how far short of perfection

she is in the flesh, and sees, additionally, how the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ covers her fleshly imperfections. So fully is all this true, that the Apostle declares that the righteousness (true import, or spirit) of the law is fulfilled in us, who are walking not after the flesh, but after the spirit.—Romans 8:4.

In other words, these who consecrate their lives to follow Jesus, sacrificing all of their earthly rights in order to do the will of God, are doing more than the law could require. The law required no man to lay down his life for another, but merely to love his neighbor as himself. Hence Christ and the church, walking in the narrow way of sacrifice, are fulfilling the requirements of the spirit of the law, and more, even though in the flesh of the church, because of inherited weaknesses, there is no perfection. These having sacrificed the earthly nature are dealt with by the Father as new creatures, and judged, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit—according to their heart intentions.

WATCH AND PRAY!

Watch and pray, the storm clouds hover over,
Fierce billows gather near with threat'ning shock;
Watch and pray, no harm can e'er come nigh thee
If thou art safely anchored to the Rock.

Watch and pray, the powers of night and darkness
Determine to engulf thee in their sway;
But swift the answer cometh from our Tower,
"I still am with thee, loved one—watch and pray."

Watch and pray, temptations round thee gather,
Cling to the Rock—its shelter hideth thee,
Tho' thousands fall, thou'rt safe if thou art watching,
Safe, in its shelter, from the angry sea.

Watch and pray, trust fully, thou wilt never
Be swept away, then, by the seething foam.
A little while, the storms will all be over,
Then, child, a loving God will take thee home.

—W. H. BUNDY.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

SEPTEMBER 14.—Exodus 20:12-21.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—Luke 10:27.

The Ten Commandments delivered to Moses were written upon two stone tablets. One bore the first four commandments, which appertain to God; the other bore the remaining six, which appertain to humanity. The essence of these last six, constituting the Study of today, was expressed in Jesus' words, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The "thou shalt not's" might be multiplied indefinitely to fit the thousands of occurrences in daily life, but the one "thou shalt" covers the entire situation. Whoever loves his neighbor will not intentionally injure him, in act, in word or in thought. Hence love expresses the full measure of the law's requirements. (Rom. 13:10)

Love is at liberty to do more than the Law requires, but it cannot do less.

While only Christians are credited by the Lord with fulfilling the requirements of the law—and they only because of the allowance made for their weaknesses on account of their relationship with Christ—nevertheless, the Jews and many others have obtained partial blessings in proportion as they have endeavored to fulfill the divine law. The natural man, not spirit-begotten, and therefore not a son of God, but still in alienation, receives a blessing of character-development in proportion as he recognizes the principles of righteousness and seeks to conform to them. Hence it is wise and proper at all times and before all people to lift high the divine standards.

HONOR FATHER AND MOTHER

No matter how old, or ignorant, or stupid, or vicious, parents may be, they are deserving of consideration from their children. Yet, of course, the kind or degree of respect must depend upon the character of the parent to some extent. With disobedience to parents rank and rampant everywhere, it may seem a hard saying, but we believe it a true one, that the disobedience is due to the parent, or the guardian, of the child.

The child may have been ill-born. Discontent and rebellion in the mind of the mother during the period of gestation may have marked the child before its birth, so that no amount of training may ever fully recover it. In such a case, the parents may well be patient and longsuffering with such unhappy, disobedient dispositions in their children.

And perhaps the parents were only partially to blame; perhaps their minister preached not the laws of God, their human operation and the penalties of their violation, but instead, gave flowery essays and anecdotes containing neither food for the spiritual nature nor assistance in understanding and combating the weaknesses of the human nature. Perhaps the fault was not wholly the mother's. The father may have forgotten that he, too, had a duty toward his offspring, chiefly served by assisting his wife at the critical period to thoughts of kindness, gentleness, nobility, etc.

At any rate, the conscientious parent has a wonderful task to train the perverted child in the nurture and admonition

of the Lord. Those who strive faithfully in this direction cannot be too much appreciated and encouraged; and more and more we should think of esteeming the parents of every noble man and woman of our acquaintance. And if strangers should appreciate the parents, much more should the child.

THE EFFECT OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS

A modern writer of considerable force and influence holds that Sunday Schools, while accomplishing good in one direction, may have done considerable harm in another—by weakening the respect of the children for their parents, and by releasing the parents from an appreciation of their responsibilities toward their children. The parents are, in the divine arrangement, the priests of God, particularly in respect to their children. To whatever extent they shirk this responsibility, or to whatever extent the honor of this station is ignored, their influence over the child is lost; and one hour's time per week in a Sunday School class can never take the place of a continual parental supervision.

Statistics show that boys of from sixteen to twenty years of age constitute about one-third of all the dangerous criminals, and that their proportionate number is increasing. Hence all benevolent people should be on the alert for the right training of the rising generation. All should especially co-operate with the divine commandment by urging and encouraging parental authority and obedience thereto. Long life and prosperity were the rewards promised to the Jews under this commandment.

"THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER"

Nothing in this commandment forbids the killing of animals when necessary to the interests of the human family, either to abate pests or to sustain life. Neither does it forbid the execution of criminals; for thus it would be in conflict with the divine law elsewhere expressed, and practised under the guidance of Moses and by divine direction.

This commandment, however, does teach that life is to be prized, not jeopardized. The spirit of this commandment, Jesus declared, includes the thought that we are not to have an angry spirit of murder, restrained merely by fear of consequences. We may thus see that the spirit of this commandment would make it incumbent upon those who employ labor or who have any supervision of their fellowmen to take all reasonable precaution for safeguarding against accidents of any kind. To allow self-interest or a love of money to perpetuate dangerous conditions would be to lack the proper spirit of obedience to this command—unchristian.

COMMIT NOT ADULTERY

One result of the fall has been a depravity of the sexual appetites. The result is impurity, unchastity, a lack of self-control. All of these tendencies lead away from God, from righteousness and from true happiness. The family unit of

one husband and one wife, originally established by the Almighty in Eden, seems to be a cornerstone of righteousness, in the family and in national life. Purity, no adulteration, is the divine requirement.

"THOU SHALT NOT STEAL"

To steal is to take from another his possessions. Had not inventions in the line of electricity and steam kept pace with our increase of knowledge, the world today would be a thieves' paradise. But while buccaneering, piracy, robbery, burglary are reprobated by all intelligent people, many have a chance for a more subtle form of stealing, through stock speculations, organization of fake companies with glittering prospects, according to description, but really organized to take advantage of the less informed or weaker minded. This is stealing.

Making false returns to tax assessors is stealing. Attempt to smuggle without proper payment of customs duty is stealing. Failure to give agreed upon services for wages received is stealing. But the worst form of stealing, the one that does more harm than all the rest combined, is the one indicated in Shakespeare's words:

"Who steals my purse, steals trash,
But he who filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And leaves me poor indeed."

The Scriptural instruction to "speak evil of no man" seems to be comparatively unknown. As a result, many defile their own characters ignobly, blight the happiness of others and add to the distress of the already groaning creation.

"BEAR NO FALSE WITNESS"

In a thousand ways the spirit of this injunction may be violated, and is violated every day, not only by misrepresenting the goods we sell, or the goods we wish to buy, but in a thousand ways of slandering a neighbor

"THOU SHALT NOT COVET"

Covetousness comes in first before the stealing, before the murdering, before the injury of slander. Covetousness is a heart disease which has to do with every other crime; for all sins have their basis in selfishness, and selfishness is covetousness. Well is this placed at the conclusion of the list. Whoever would keep the spirit of God's Law must guard his heart against covetousness.

TRANS-CONTINENTAL CONVENTION TOUR

CONTINUED FROM OUR LAST

We left Vancouver, B. C., near midnight, June 22. Many of the dear friends accompanied us to the train, loading us with flowers and bidding us God-speed. The journey to Calgary, Alta., required a day and a half. It afforded beautiful views of the Rocky Mountains and the glaciers, at the same time giving the Editor and his stenographer opportunity for literary work.

Calgary, June 24.—We were warmly welcomed by the brethren here and greatly enjoyed fellowshiping with them in the afternoon. The great interest centered in the evening meeting, which had been well advertised. We were not disappointed in the results. Approximately 1,500 heard with the closest attention the story of the love of God—his wonderful provision for his elect church on the heavenly plane, and his restitution provision for the non-elect world on the earthly plane.

While pointing out the blessings of the coming age for the world of mankind, at the hands of the glorified Redeemer and the saintly church, his bride, we failed not to call special attention to the great privilege of the present time—the only opportunity that will ever be offered to any for attaining glory, honor, immortality and joint-heirship with the risen Master, as "partakers of the divine nature." (2 Pet. 1:4) We considered the attendance very remarkable for a week night and a religious subject. That considerable interest was developed was manifested by the fact that 270 addresses were handed in making request for literature.

Edmonton, Alta., was our next stop. It was our most northern appointment, and was our first visit to that city. Out of a total population of 55,000, the attendance at our public address included 2,000 adults; very astonishing results for a week night religious meeting. Who will say that the public has no interest in religion! More and more we are convinced that many souls are hungering because unwilling to feed upon the chaff of human speculations evolved into creeds and nonsense of the dark ages. The real message of the Gospel, "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people," has a charm, an attraction, for intelligent, thinking people. Here we had 372 addresses handed in expressing desire for further information.

We spent a pleasant time with the friends here also, and left them apparently encouraged, as we, of the Excursion party, were encouraged also by meeting them. We had another long ride to Regina, Sask. The mountain scenery was gone and, instead, we traversed vast prairies. A full day's journey afforded another good opportunity for literary work.

Regina we should have reached at 5 p. m. Our schedule at Regina was, too, a limited one. The meeting had been arranged for 8 p. m. Anxiety increased as we ascertained that the train would be an hour, and yet another, and another, late. We could not hope that an audience assembling from 7:30 to 8 o'clock would remain long under such uncertainties, especially not until 10 o'clock! We were disappointed, and wondered why the Lord had allowed matters to be so. But on arriving we were met by some of the friends who advised us that the meeting was waiting for us! Street cars and automobiles soon hurried us to the place of meeting.

We were pleasantly surprised to find that the Editor of the local newspaper had taken the platform in our interest; this had helped to entertain the audience during the waiting period. Already we were introduced before going on to the

platform. Without preliminaries—other than a brief supplication for the divine blessing—we proceeded with the topic announced, BEYOND THE GRAVE. Our audience numbering altogether about 800, remained to the close, 11:30 p. m., and handed in 168 requests for further information.

We considered the meeting a very remarkable manifestation of interest. The very Editor who presided explained that some time ago he had published our sermons weekly, but under certain arrangements made with him by local ministers he had discontinued them. The ministers had not been able to point out anything wrong with the sermons, but they had taken up certain slanderous misrepresentations regarding "Pastor Russell," and shot out at him their evil "arrows, even bitter words."—Psa. 64:3.

Brandon, Manitoba, was reached the next morning. It was not a favorable time for a public meeting, but was the only time at our disposal and the friends there had arranged for a public meeting at 10:30 a. m., Friday, June 27, in the Sherman Theater. We were surprised at so good an audience as 900, with 88 requests for further information handed in. For a small city, on a week-day and for a religious topic, was not that a wonderful attendance at a morning meeting? Thus it seems to us. Our convention party constituted nearly 200 of the above number.

Winnipeg, Manitoba, was reached the same afternoon, and a public address was given at the new Convention Hall. The attendance was estimated at 3,000. Closest of attention was given and 314 requests for further information were handed to the ushers. On the next day we had quite an interesting little convention at Odd Fellows Temple. These meetings were not advertised and were attended only by already interested Bible Students. The friends were very enthusiastic and appeared greatly to enjoy the addresses, not only from Brother Russell, but also from several of the convention-train party.

Saturday evening when we were leaving, many of the local Bible Students crowded about the convention-train of eleven cars, singing hymns to us and we to them, respecting the precious tie that binds our hearts in Christian love, and praying in song, "God be with you till we meet again!"

Sunday, June 29, brought us to Minneapolis for the afternoon meeting and to St. Paul, the sister city, for the night meeting. A wave of hot weather met us there and much decreased the attendance at both meetings. In the afternoon we had approximately 1,200; in the evening about 900—a phenomenal attendance for such extreme sultry weather. We were not discouraged, nor were the dear friends who had worked very earnestly and faithfully, expecting cooler weather, in which event the attendance at these meetings would have been at least 3,000; 290 requests for further information were handed to the ushers.

At midnight we left for the Madison, Wisconsin, eight-day convention; a car-load of Minneapolis and St. Paul friends accompanied us. We stopped but one day at Madison, and then the convention-train made its next appointment at Rockford, Illinois. Here, approximately 1,000 of the public gave us the closest attention, after we had been introduced by His Honor, the Mayor. Requests for further information here handed in, numbered 74. The convention-train then returned to Madison, terminating thus our Trans-Continental Convention Tour.

Almost the entire party declared that Dr. L. W. Jones, the conductor and manager of the excursion and train, deserved great credit for the way in which he handled every detail of

the trip. They agreed, as with one voice, that the convention tour had been one of the greatest events of their lives—spiritual from first to last. Their association with the dear friends at different points on the way had done them good, and their endeavors put forth to refresh and encourage others had also done them good.

The Editor expressed to Dr. Jones special thanks for his

FOUR GREAT CONVENTIONS

We believe that the result stamps approval on the method adopted this year of having a number of Conventions, instead of one or two. We have already reported general conventions at Pertle Springs, Missouri; Hot Springs, Arkansas; Los Angeles, California, and San Francisco, California. They were all large enough to be good, deeply interesting, spiritual, profitable. The four we are now reporting, being more favorably located as respects population and railroad facilities, had larger attendance, yet were not too large for comfort, and afforded abundant opportunities for social entertainment and spiritual fellowship.

MADISON, WISCONSIN, JUNE 29-JULY 6

The Madison Convention seemed to be greatly enjoyed by all in attendance—about 1,400. We have never had a convention more comfortably situated than was this. Madison itself is a beautiful little city, surrounded by small lakes. The convention grounds being just across one of these lakes from the city, were in every way ideal. Little gasoline launches conveyed the conventioners to and from the grounds, which were supplied with a fine auditorium, well adapted for convention purposes. The auditorium is owned by the city, and was placed at our disposal, gratis, when the invitation to hold the convention at Madison was given.

Following the custom of the last few years, we avoided evening meetings. The full day was spent in convention, with merely an adjournment for luncheon, which was supplied nearby at moderate price. There were about six addresses daily, during the convention—eight days. The public doubtless wondered at the enthusiasm of the friends—as they always do—not knowing, generally, what it means to have a real live religion; one which has for its center and inspiration “exceeding great and precious promises,” from an exceedingly wise, all-powerful, just and loving God.

Brother W. E. Van Amburgh served as chairman during the entire eight days’ convention. The conventioners surely had a grand, though quiet season of spiritual refreshment. There were no side attractions or disturbances. Every day was a quiet, joyful, happy Sabbath, and there was surely a “feast of fat things.” The evenings were spent in the city with the parties with whom the friends were lodged. Some were invited to go out with their hosts for a boat ride on the lake; some took automobile rides; others went to give Chart Talks and explain the divine plan. Still others of the friends visited with each other, renewing former acquaintances and cementing new friendships.

We heard some very complimentary remarks passed in respect to the conventioners. The owner of the gasoline launches was heard to say that there never had been such a convention there before. Some of those who entertained the friends, meeting the sisters who had engaged the rooms, thanked them for sending such nice people, and said they had appreciated them much. Surely this was only as it should have been. As the Apostle Peter questioned, “What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and Godliness?”

If those who have a true knowledge of God and who have consecrated their lives to the service of righteousness, and to opposition of iniquity do not manifest the fruits of the Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love—then where, pray, should we expect to find these graces exemplified?

Those who attended the Madison convention unanimously declared it to be the “best ever!” Yet this is the same general sentiment attaching to our conventions. The last always seems to be the best. And why should it not really be so? If the Lord’s people are growing in grace, knowledge and love daily, as we trust is the case, then each convention should be a little better than its predecessor.

SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS, JULY 13-20

Brother J. F. Rutherford served as chairman during the eight delightful days of this convention. The list of speakers was excellent, numbering in all about forty. Several dear friends were heard to remark that this was the “sweetest” convention they had ever attended, in that everything passed off so quietly, comfortably, happily. Our comfortable meeting place undoubtedly contributed greatly to the charm of this convention. The city of Springfield invited the conven-

tioners to be their guests, and placed at the disposal of our Association for the period of their sojourn their elegant new Auditorium, just finished. It is handsomely decorated in white and gold, is spacious and the acoustics is good.

Our convention attendance averaged about 2,000, the Sunday service running the attendance up to 2,400 or 3,000. The Convention proper, without the public, numbered about 1,800. The majority of the Bethel family attended this convention and were the guests of the Springfield class of I. B. S. A. Thus being left free, the Bethelites had all the better opportunity for rendering service to others. But, indeed, this spirit of service seemed to pervade all the dear friends in attendance. Each seemed on the lookout to see in what manner he or she could serve others and make them more happy or more comfortable. As a result, all were happy. A sweet spirit of peace and order prevailed, which reminds us very much of the great convention which we are all hoping soon to attend.

Although the Convention Hall is in the very center of the city, it is so roomy and of such excellent construction that it was pleasantly cool and was in every way a delightful place for a convention. The people of this city treated us very cordially, although not very many of them attended our meetings, of course; nor did we expect them so to do. These conventions are particularly intended to give opportunity for Bible Students to become specially acquainted with each other, with their Bibles and with its great and glorious plan of salvation, which more and more appeals to their hearts, and assists them in making their calling and election sure.

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CONVENTION, JULY 20-27

We have had a convention in Toronto before. Indeed, the city, so far as respects the attendance of our Canadian brethren, is very centrally located. Favorable railroad rates are always granted. This year’s convention surprised us by its size—about 1,200. We had not expected nearly so many when the appointment was made. Of this number about one-half were from the United States, the friends taking advantage of some of the low priced excursions.

Notwithstanding certain adverse conditions, stirred up by those Scripturally termed “sons of Belial,” the convention was in every way a success. If some of the public had their minds poisoned by slanderous misrepresentations and were thus hindered from availing themselves of the opportunity of sharing the blessed privileges afforded them, others, we are sure, were profited thereby. Some attended this convention largely because they perceived that an evil spirit of slander and misrepresentation was for some reason endeavoring to do injury to a religious work. Satan and his blinded and misguided servants overdo in their endeavors to injure the Lord’s cause. Sometimes the Lord overrules the wrath of man for his own praise and for the forwarding of the truth. As for instance, in the case of a man who, being told that Pastor Russell was Antichrist, went to see what Antichrist might look like. Hearing the joyful message of the Gospel, his heart was captured and now he rejoices.

Brother A. I. Ritchie served as the chairman of the Toronto convention. A strong corps of speakers was provided, and the more than forty addresses at the convention were up to a high standard, both for grace and truth, spirituality and power. That “It is good to be here” was surely the sentiment of many hearts; and the season of refreshing undoubtedly provided blessings not only for those in attendance at the convention, but for other thousands at their homes, upon whom doubtless was poured forth a share of the blessings. The Lord arranges it so that those who give out to others grace and truth received by themselves have an increased supply, even as with the widow’s cruse of oil.

ASHEVILLE, N. C., CONVENTION, JULY 20-27

All in attendance at the Asheville convention will surely agree that the Auditorium so kindly placed by the city at the disposal of the Association furnished a delightful convention hall. Situated high up in the mountains, Asheville has a delightful climate greatly enjoyed by the visitors, who were estimated at 1,200, the larger attendance at the public meeting being principally made up of people from the city and immediate vicinity. The railroads gave us specially good