

lom, the disrespectful, ungrateful, disobedient son, selfish, avacious and grasping, came to a disgraceful end in the prime of life, and marks a lesson to his kind. On the other hand

Solomon, the peaceful, the good, the wise son, attained to the kingdom, and attained to it, too, with his father's blessing and the divine favor.

REV. DR. MORGAN SAYS HE IS NOT AN INFIDEL

"I preached this summer in Fifth Avenue church New York, a series of sermons on some of the saying of the Gospel of John. When I came to deal with the death of Christ, I began by saying that it brought me face to face with a moral mystery; that unless there was some explanation of that tragic ending of a pure life, it was the most terrible reflection on the government of God, and would make me an infidel. The whole sermon was to answer that position and to show how the death of Christ reveals the infinite goodness of God. But next morning I saw in the *New York Journal* a flaming headline:

"DR. MORGAN PUZZLED ABOUT THE DEATH OF CHRIST: SAYS THAT THERE IS A MORAL MYSTERY IN IT, AND IT MAKES HIM AN INFIDEL."

"This was copied into religious periodicals, and ever since I have been receiving letters explaining the death of Christ. In fact, the cutting has been sent to me three times within the last two weeks by people in England."

* * *

ZION'S WATCH TOWER, having circulated the error, takes pleasure in correcting it. It is always difficult to choose words which the worldly cannot misconstrue, and doubtless this illustration will make Doctor Morgan, and us all, more careful than ever to avoid expressions subject to such distortion. On the other hand we are glad that in this day of "falling away" from the faith there were still numerous religious journals ready to protect against such teachings in pulpits dedicated to God.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

A BIBLE LEAGUE

"A 'Bible League' has been organized in the Methodist Episcopal church, with the avowed purpose of *driving out destructive Higher Criticism*. Its president is Bishop Mallalieu, and the promoters hope to establish branches in every Methodist Conference in the country."—*Exchange*.

We are glad to see that the situation is being partially realized. It is much more dangerous than many might be willing to believe. No words can more graphically describe the results than the words of Scripture themselves, viz.: "A thousand shall fall at thy side." (Psa. 91:7) A thousand to fall to one who will stand means a great "falling away" from faith. Our Master's question is pertinent here, "When the Son of Man cometh [at his second advent] shall he find faith on the earth?"

The cleavage or separation on this subject can only result favorably so far as the gathering of the Lord's "jewels" is concerned. Those who will cling to the Bible honestly and intelligently will give it more careful examination than ever. And their longings will not be satisfied by the interpretations and creeds of the dark ages, ruled by superstition and the spirit of persecution. Nothing short of "the faith once delivered to the saints," which now rejoices our hearts with its lengths and breadths and heights and depths of divine love and provision, will satisfy them. These will be but a "little flock" in all, however. We will be glad to greet Bp. Mallalieu among them, but we do not forget the Apostle's words, that not many rich or great or noble are being chosen now, but chiefly the poor and ignoble, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom.

That the battle above referred to has commenced is shown by the press dispatch:—

"CHICAGO, SEPTEMBER 10.

"*The Outlook*, an official publication of the Methodist denomination, has made a sensational attack upon the Methodist universities. That the doctrines of "Tom" Paine are being taught by Dr. Milton S. Terry, professor of Theology in Garrett Biblical Institute, and by Dr. Hinkley G. Mitchell, of the Boston University School of Theology, is the charge. Methodists are advised not to send their sons and daughters to schools 'where such teachers are allowed to remain on the faculty.'"

GENERAL UNREST PREVAILS

"Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plow shares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong."—Joel 3:9-16.

The whole world is growing restless—preparing to fulfil the above prophecy, of which we quote only the introduction. The people of Macedonia and Bulgaria are impatient of the Turkish rule, and fomenting rebellion and bringing upon themselves the brutal vengeance of their rulers—the only kind of reprisal and suppression known to the Ottoman.

France is still in a warfare with the secret orders of the Roman Catholic church, in an attempt to free the rising generation from the incubus of superstition, which it realizes has for years been opposing the Republic by misrepresentations of the facts of history. In a word, the French Government is seeking to turn the religious schools built by the people into free public schools, similar to those of the United States. They refuse to have these taught by garbed nuns and priests, and the

golden hours of childhood given specially to studying the Roman Catholic Catechism. In no sense is it a movement to curb the freedom of the Roman Catholic conscience to believe and teach as it pleases outside the public schools. This warfare is so absorbing to the French that other questions are no more than secondary. The clerical party would even favor war in hope of reviving monarchy.

In England a very similar question is before the public mind. Parliament has recently put the control of public-school education into the hands of the church (Episcopal), and other denominations are fearful of the results.

In Austro-Hungary partisanism runs high. Both nations desire to exercise controlling influence, yet both realize that division would injure both dreadfully. They maintain a union of hatred and bitterness that bodes an open warfare at the opportune moment.

Russia, according to the *London Times*, is keeping from general publicity her dreadful internal disorders, which may eventually force her into war to offset the restless spirit and give it employment. It says in part:—

"The murderous assault made on Prince Urussoff by the peasants of his estate, in the province of Tchernigoff, has its parallel in the similar crime perpetrated on the person of Prince Gargarin, his wife, and their guest, Prince Sherbatoff, in the province of Riazan, hundreds of miles further north. The governor of the province of Ufa has been murdered under the shadow of the Urals; and the prisons of St. Petersburg are filled with political prisoners, who largely belong to that most dangerous of all classes, the intellectual proletariat. The very forces of the state are not themselves untainted. There were military trials at Moscow not many weeks since for revolutionary agitation in the army, and it is even alleged that several members of the crew of the imperial yacht, including some non-commissioned officers, are at present in detention in the capital for being in possession of forbidden literature on board the *Standart*, (the Czar's yacht) herself.

"The government appears to have been attempting to practice a double policy toward the labor movement, which now for the first time is growing conscious of its strength. On the one hand. M. Witte seems to have attempted more than two years ago to solve the problem by discovering the real wants and wishes of the artisans and factory hands. As the result of a conference instituted on his suggestion, the men obtained the right to elect spokesmen who might confer with the manufacturers and government inspectors. But the new scheme has not been fairly applied, while a childish attempt has been made by the reactionaries to convince the working-men that their best friends are the bureaucrats and their worst enemies the enlightened middle classes. In several cases the men have elected their representatives, only to see them subjected to summary arrest, while any combined action by the men employed in different factories is severely punished. On the other hand the secret police of St. Petersburg have been endeavoring to educate the workmen in loyalty to the existing institutions of the country by telling them that the French Revolution led merely to the triumph of the *bourgeois*, bought by the blood of the proletariat, and that the Government are eager to meet them half way. Naturally these devices have not produced much effect, but neither, so far, have the repressive measures of M. dePlehve. The problem remains unsolved and perhaps

insoluble, and the fact may not be without its influence on the foreign policy of the empire, both in the Balkans and elsewhere. In the face of such enigmas foreign adventures have been undertaken before now as a diversion, but history shows that the remedy has often merely aggravated the disorder."

It is thought by some that the chief danger of war between Russia and Japan lies in the internal unrest of Russia, the supposition being that war might be esteemed an advantage if it would serve to unify the nation or give excuse for radical measure as war necessities, giving malcontents the appearance of open rebels.

Germany is so full of the factional spirit and so verging on to socialism that some are sighing for war to unite and cement them as was the case thirty years ago. The *Deutsch Wacht* says:

"No inglorious (*faul*) peace! And inglorious to the core has become that peace which, armored in steel and bristling with weapons, now lies upon our portion of the globe and beneath the weight of which we Germans have had to endure so much. The eternal repetition of peace twaddle has unmanned our ears; love of peace, emphasized on all occasions, has inspired in our enemies an impression that we are weak, and has already robbed some part of our nation of its confidence in our strength. The campaign in China was a flaming forth of the old warlike fire, but the blaze was soon extinguished. When we now make a movement to display our fist in far away Asia, the feminizing breath of peace is felt with enervating effect in Europe in order to make the sword drop nimbly from the hand.

"The peace that we now enjoy has damaged us because we value it above everything else, and have forgotten that readiness for peace brings honor only to those of whom it is known that they can be strongly stern, and are in a position to strike and make the splinters fly.

"The peace of this post-Bismarckian period has made us inglorious at home as well. We Germans can not maintain our sense of strength without the impulse of pressure from above, without a sharp, powerful summons at the moment we are to stand united. Such a summons has been wanting. Under Bismarck we were constantly being roused. We knew that honor might require us any day to grasp the sword again and fight foes outnumbering ourselves. This knowledge united us, or at least suppressed the divisions among the German people. We have no such influence at work now. Ever since the adoption of the policy of obsequiousness, the Philistines have evidently nothing to fear from a foreign foe. We are, in fact, good friends with everybody, as fine speeches and flattering telegrams have testified a hundred times. And the same tone prevails as regards German unity. Mighty has been the upstart growth of Ultramontanism under the protection of inglorious peace. It has already divided Germany into two camps, between which there is such total alienation of sentiment as makes concord impossible. Daily widens the rift made by Social-Democracy between the classes among our population, aided by the circumstances of the inglorious peace. Daily the blind masses are more and more set on by agitation. To our people this peril, which has a foreign intellectual origin, grows more dire, and it could carry out its mission of destruction only beneath a rule of inglorious peace.

"He only fashions a sword who has never felt fear. But the German people, God save us, have been made fearful since 1888. Then may heaven make us see the dread perils which glower down upon us from within and without. Thus may we free ourselves from the enervating, inglorious peace, and once more, in unity and strength, win the proud self-consciousness which inspires our saying 'Many enemies mean much honor!'"

A PROMINENT MAN'S VIEWS

Hon. Whitelaw Reid, for many years editor of the *New York Tribune*, speaking to the graduates of Vassar College and their friends, said in part:

Of specific excesses toward which our Democratic institutions seem to be tending, perhaps we do not need now to speak in any great detail. It may be enough to recognize that the

American who colonized the Atlantic Coast and the great Middle West, who framed the Constitution, started the Government, developed the country under it, and fought a gigantic civil war to preserve it, is not the American who leads the popular movements of today. The type is changing; the beliefs are changing, and the aims.

He is neither Puritan any longer, nor Cavalier. He may outwardly deny the decay of faith, but he inwardly feels it. Nothing is more noticeable at the great centers of population and of national activity, or in any large section of what calls itself, and is often called, our best society, than this disappearance of the old foundation of character and action; this loss of profound, enduring, restful faith in anything. It is a *laissezaller* age; an age of loosening anchors and drifting with the tide; of taking things as they are, with cordial readiness to take them hereafter as they come; of an easy indifference, whose universal attitude toward each startling departure from old standards is "What does it matter, anyway?"—an age, in short, marked by a refined, "up-to-date" adaptation of the old Epicurean idea that there is nothing in this world to do but to eat, drink and make merry, for tomorrow we die.

The loss of faith brings us by this short cut straight to the loss of purpose in life—of any purpose at least beyond purely material ones. To those who need money, the duty of getting it first, and above anything else, becomes the gospel of life. To those who feel the need of position, whether in society, business or elsewhere, their gospel drives them to all means within the law to obtain that. To those who have both money and position comes the only remaining purpose in life, that of using them for an existence of amusement and enjoyment. Is it too much to say that never before in our history have such aspirations so completely dominated and limited such large classes?

WHAT MANY FIND LEFT IN LIFE

But this craze for mere amusement and enjoyment, like other perverted appetites, grows by what it feeds on. The amusement soon becomes wearisome, the enjoyment soon palls, unless constantly more and more spectacular and bizarre. Perpetual change and constantly increasing variety of extremes seem to be the ever-rising price of keeping amused. One never is for long where one wants to be, or doing what one desires; there must be incessantly a rushing to and fro, and a change of pursuits, all under the glare of electric lights and the blare of brass bands. If in the country, one must hasten to the city, where something is going on; if in the city, one must fly to the country, where the crowd is not so mixed and where pleasanter house parties can be gathered; if in one's own land, one longs for the boulevards or the Alps; if abroad, one is eager to try the new steamer back; if at the seashore, one wants suddenly to know what the mountains are like, and can only find amusement in going to see when clothed in leather jackets, protected by masks and goggles, and powdered with dirt, rushing through the dusty air on the highways at forty or fifty miles an hour in a Red Devil, and leaving the luckless rustics in the way to go to a fiend of any color they like.

Even then this vehement vacuity is not amusing unless it is talked about. One must be forever before the footlights and if possible, in the center of the stage. Privacy is deadly dullness. Not to have your name every other day in the newspapers is to be out of the world, to be bored to death. Not to see every intimate fact about yourself or your friends thrust naked and shameless under the public eye is to feel that you are dropping out of the swim.

* * *

The public seems to be slowly awakening to the realization that the far-sighted Jesuits have been working their representatives into the *Associated Press*, which supplies general news to many newspapers all over the world. The effect seems to be to give prominence and good tone to things Roman Catholic and to suppress as much as would be wise of contrary news. Young Catholics are trained to this service and quietly and unostentatiously pushed into controlling positions—unsuspecting Protestants often unwittingly assisting in the scheme.

THE "DEBATE" REPORTS

Responses to our notice that the *Pittsburg Gazette* would publish lengthy reports of the Doctrinal Discussions between Doctor Eaton and Pastor Russell almost overwhelmed our office force as well as the *Gazette's*. Orders have come in for more than twice the number we guaranteed and more are still coming.

Friends will please accept the arrival of the *Gazette* as evidence of our having received their letters, and not expect other acknowledgment. Indeed, as may be surmised, all of our correspondence is greatly belated on this account, and it will require considerable time to get caught up;—and the less

important letters may need to be wholly neglected, much as we should like to reply to them all.

The *Gazette's* supply of the first report becoming exhausted, that journal reprinted the debate reports under another date, and request us to explain the reason, and to assure subscribers that all orders received will be filled promptly. Should any of our friends not receive the papers ordered by them, they should report to us by postal card. Later orders will be filled at once by special edition containing the six debates. These latter we will supply postpaid on order—at the rate of 2 cents each. In lots of 50 or over one cent each, express paid.

PASTOR RUSSELL'S WEEKLY DISCOURSES

The Pittsburgh Gazette proposes to print Brother Russell's sermons every Monday hereafter, until further notice. Thinking that some of our readers would like to have these we have arranged to club the *Gazette* and the WATCH TOWER at \$3.25 per year,—beginning as soon as you like. This will give the WATCH TOWER semi-monthly and the *Gazette* daily postpaid at

less than one cent per copy. Send all subscriptions to us.

But this does not apply to territory within 100 miles of Pittsburgh where the *Gazette* may have an *agent*, as the agent must be protected. However, there are many places near at which there are no agents, and where agents can be found the Monday papers can be obtained from them.

"YE KNOW YOUR CALLING, BRETHREN"

"But ye are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9.

"Vocation" is the term that describes the special business of any person, while the word "avocation" describes an occasional business; as, the Apostle Paul's vocation was that of a minister of the truth, while his avocation, or occasional employment when necessary to provide things honest and decent in the sight of God and men, was tent-making. Similarly all of the Lord's people should consider that their vocation or calling is of God and relates to the special or spiritual ministry in which he privileges us to engage as fellow servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. In order to provide the necessities of life for ourselves and those dependent on us, it is necessary that we should have some earthly employment also; but this we should always regard, not as our vocation—not as our chief or principal business in life—but merely as our avocation, or temporary engagement incidentally necessary to our chief business. Of course it would not be wise for the Lord's people to speak of spiritual things from this standpoint to worldly people. Our Lord warned us against so doing, saying, "Cast not your pearls before swine"—attempt not to tell the deep and precious things that belong to you as spiritual new creatures in Christ, and which you only can understand and appreciate through the holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:14), to those who have not the spirit and who cannot comprehend your teachings and who would be disappointed in the matter, as swine would be disappointed if you gave them pearls which they could not appreciate, instead of corn which they could appreciate. In our own hearts, however, and amongst the "brethren," this thought should always be uppermost; namely, that our calling, or business, or vocation is of God,—that we are called to be members of the royal priesthood.

We are viewing our text just now specially from the standpoint of the priesthood, or new race, or new nation, different from the remainder of mankind in that God has invited them to become joint-heirs with his Son in the great royal priesthood which he designs shall ultimately bless all the families of the earth. The royal feature of the matter belongs to the future; we have no royalty yet. It is only in prospect; it will be attained after we have faithfully performed the service which belongs to this present time and have thus proven ourselves worthy, according to the divine terms, to be members of the glorified priesthood through our Lord Jesus' merit, and under him as our head. Meantime it behooves us to learn distinctly what is expected of us as respects our vocation in the present time; what obligations attach to us as those who have made the consecration and have been respectively accepted to this royal priesthood and anointed with the holy Spirit in anticipation of our attainment of the goal.

The Apostle Paul (Heb. 8:3) declares that "Every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man [the man Christ Jesus] have somewhat also to offer." The thought is that the high priest serves,—is as an offerer or sacrificer to God. True, the Apostle is speaking here of our Lord Jesus and not of us, but from his own words elsewhere we will know that it is expected of all the members of the body that they shall be joint sharers with their Lord and Master in the sufferings and sacrifices of this present time, that they may be counted worthy to share with him the glories of the future. And the same Apostle explains that he (Christ) is our Head, and that we are, as members of his body, "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ," walking in his footsteps. The lesson, then, to each member of this royal priesthood, is that the special mission of their office, vocation, calling in the present time, is to sacrifice.

In the light of the Apostle's explanation we can see that our Lord Jesus as the Head Priest had something to offer to God, and that he did offer it in that he offered up himself a sacrifice. (Heb. 7:27) We can see how his sacrifice could be acceptable to God, because in him was no sin—he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. But how can we, who "by nature are children of wrath even as others,"—how can we fulfil our mission as priests to present some offering to God when we have nothing which is our own that would be acceptable, because all we have and are is by nature tainted with

sin and under divine condemnation? The Scriptures answer that "that which God hath cleansed," his people are no longer to consider common or unclean; they tell us that God has justified us freely from our imperfections through the merit of Christ's sacrifice; they tell us that we are acceptable to God "in the Beloved."

The Apostle carries this same thought further, and emphasizes it, saying, "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, [no longer aliens, strangers, foreigners, but redeemed and accepted of the Father], that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) Here the entire matter is summed up. We are not to consider any longer that, after being justified by faith, the Lord esteems us unholy and unacceptable, but are to understand that the very object of our present justification by faith was to make us acceptable to the Father, to make us to be priests, to furnish us opportunities to do the work of a priest in this present time: namely, to sacrifice—to sacrifice ourselves—to present our bodies living sacrifices to God through Christ's merit. What a wonderful plan! what a wonderful privilege to be permitted to be priests! what a gracious arrangement! It gives us opportunity of completing the priestly service of sacrificing now, to the intent that by and by we may enjoy the privileges of the other part of the priest's work, connected with the glory and royalty of the Millennial kingdom.

If then God ordained the High Priest to offer sacrifices, and that was the particular feature of his calling while on earth, so likewise it is the particular feature of the calling of all those who would walk in his steps—ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices to God. The Apostle Peter calls this same matter to our attention in a verse preceding our text (v. 5), where he declares the church "A holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Ah, but, says one, the apostles differ respecting what shall be our sacrifices. The Apostle Paul declares, "Present your body a living sacrifice," while the Apostle Peter here declares that we should offer up spiritual sacrifices, and our bodies are certainly not spiritual bodies. We reply that the word "*spiritual*" in this text is not found in the oldest Greek manuscript, known as the *Sinaitic*. Apparently some scribe of about the fourth or fifth century must have concluded that the Apostle had left his statement of the matter incomplete, and that there would be danger of some undersanding him to mean that the royal priesthood should offer bullocks and goats; and to hinder such a construction of the Apostle's language, the no doubt well-meaning copyist added the word "*spiritual*."

But in the light of present truth we can see that he erred in attempting to assist the inspiration which guided the Apostle to a proper statement of the matter. We can see most clearly that our Lord Jesus did not offer a *spiritual* sacrifice, but a *human* sacrifice for sin—that for this reason it was necessary that he should leave the spiritual condition in which he previously existed and should take upon him human conditions,—become a man,—that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man. Adam was not a spirit being when he sinned, hence God's sentence was not against a spirit being, but, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Hence it was necessary that the Lord Jesus should become the *man* Christ Jesus; that as by a *man* came death so also by man should come the resurrection of the dead. And as our Lord's sacrifice was not a spiritual sacrifice but a human one, so it is also with our sacrifice: we are not to sacrifice our spiritual natures nor our spiritual interests nor anything else that is spiritual; but we are to sacrifice our justified human natures, our justified flesh, as the Apostles urge, "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

The question should now properly arise in the minds of all who realize themselves as consecrated to the Lord, as members of the royal priesthood. To what extent am I fulfilling my present priestly office, and performing daily as I may have opportunity my appointed work of sacrifice—laying down my life for the brethren? Too many, alas! under the false teach-

ings of Babylon, both in word and in custom, have come to consider that money getting and honor getting and ease getting and general self-preservation constitute the reasonable service of the Lord's people. Sacrificers are looked upon as deluded fanatics—especially in proportion as the sacrificing is done for the truth's sake in the interest of spiritual things. We are not, however, to be taught of the world, nor by a cold worldly-wise churchianity; but we are to hearken to the voice of the good Shepherd, to hear his Word, to learn of him if we would be prepared by him in the school of Christ for the glorious things promised us as his joint-heirs in the future. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him," is the message.

We can see how the Apostle, even though finding it at times necessary to engage in the business of tent-making, might be considered as a priest whose time, energy, talents were all sacrificed to the Lord and given freely in serving his people—in doing good unto all men as he had opportunity, especially unto the household of faith: but how can others who have not the opportunity, not the talents, not the open door for such special service as his—how can those who must provide for their own household according to the Lord's Word, be sacrificing priests, when as a matter of necessity nearly all of their time must be given to tent-making, shoe-making, housework, or whatever other employment providence seems to have opened before them as their avocations? When it is necessary to spend nearly all of eight to twelve hours per day continuously in the service of our avocations, how can we consider or serve the interest of our vocation, the priesthood?

The Lord has very graciously made arrangements adapted to this very condition. He assures us in his Word that it is not the amount we shall accomplish in this cause, but the spirit, the desire and the effort which we manifest that in his esteem would indicate the degree of our self-sacrifice. He graciously declares that if our hearts be given to him, whatsoever we do may be done as unto the Lord, and if done as unto him will be accepted by him. From this standpoint we can see that the work which the Apostle Paul did upon the tents passed to his credit as a part of his priestly sacrifice, just as much as the other part of his time which he spent in more congenial methods of proclaiming the Gospel. Similarly, we can see that the shoemaker working at his bench, or the tinner at his labor, or the butcher in his shop, or the housekeeper, if at heart fully consecrated to the Lord, would be seeking to do their work as unto the Lord, and that if careful to use his opportunities for proclaiming the truth, for serving the brethren, for doing good unto all men as opportunity afforded, the improvement of the few opportunities coming to them and their willingness to sacrifice personal tastes and convenience for the service of the truth and for the brethren, would be counted by the Lord as a full sacrifice, because such a disposition in respect to little things would imply an equal faithfulness in the presence of larger opportunities. Luke 16:10.

This does not mean that the Lord's people are to be content with the usual routine of daily life in the home or in the shop, and are to say to themselves, "God accepts my labor as thoroughly as though it were given directly to him in some other more desirable form," but it does mean that each person so situated should day by day carefully scan his earthly duties and obligations to see in what manner he could justly and properly cut off moments, hours or days from the service of earthly things and earthly interests, that now might be given to sacrifice for spiritual things and spiritual interests of himself or others. The consecrated heart, the sacrificing priest, is the one who will improve the moments as they swiftly fly, using them as far as possible in the Father's business. For instance, a workman may not take his employer's time to talk religion to his mate, for that would be unjust and contrary to the divine arrangement; but in the noon hour he may improve opportunities, and instead of engaging in worldly or foolish conversation or rude jest, he will seek to use opportunities to tell the good tidings to others; or if he have no such opportunities, finding no hearing ears, he will use the time in spiritually uplifting himself by study of the teachings and principles of the divine Word. In the evening he may not neglect duties of a social nature toward his wife and children, but will remember that under the divine arrangement he has some obligation toward them in respect to their mental and spiritual development as well as for their temporal necessities, and he will seek to use a part of his time in their service, perhaps sacrificing an inclination to read some story of light literature, or to indolently while away the time doing nothing. In addition to thinking of his obligations toward his family, he will think beyond them of his own spiritual needs and of the Lord's family and their necessities, and will endeavor to judge of the mind of the Lord in respect to how each moment shall be used.

He consecrated every hour, every moment, when he presented himself a living sacrifice to the Lord; and the opportunities of laying down moments and hours in the interests of his new creature and in the interests of spiritual brethren, etc., are coming and going daily, and the Lord is looking to see to what extent he was a sincere covenanter, sacrificer. These sacrifices on behalf of neighbors, friends, wife, children, husband, parents, are accepted of the Lord if done as a result of consecration to him, and as a result of the believing that these are the opportunities which his providence has opened for exhibition of the self-sacrificing spirit.

The same opportunities, though in a different form, come to the youth who is under age and subject to his parents, and to the wife surrounded by family cares and duties. If the consecration be to the Lord, then every sacrifice of our just rights and interests on behalf of ourselves as new creatures, on behalf of husbands or children, father or mother, neighbors or friends, brethren in Christ, is counted of the Lord as so much done to him; whereas if the very same services were rendered from any other standpoint—by any one unjustified, and not consecrated to the Lord, or merely done to the individuals and not as a sacrifice unto the Lord—these things would not count to us as priests, as our sacrifices; but when viewed from the standpoint of consecration to the Lord, and faithfully performed as being our best judgment of what would be the Lord's will concerning our use of our time, interests, talents, etc., they are sacrifices wholly acceptable to God, our reasonable service.

We are to remember that abstaining from immoralities, from sins, is not sacrificing. Nothing can be acceptably sacrificed to the Lord that is not of itself right, just, proper. It may be imperfect, as all that we have and do are necessarily blemished by reason of our share with the race in its fall; but unintentional blemishes of proper things are all covered by the merits of our Redeemer's sacrifice, as we have just seen. Another form of sacrifice frequently not discerned by the royal priesthood is the opportunity of renouncing our own ways or plans, our own methods or preferences, and in the interests of peace accepting instead the plans, the preferences of others—where it is merely a matter of personal preference, and where we believe the Lord will be as willing to have the matter one way as another. We can in the interests of peace sacrifice our preferences to the wishes of others if we see some good can be gained by such a course; as, for instance, the preservation of the peace of the home or the opportunity of winning our opponent to the truth, or any good cause. Such sacrifices are pleasing to the Lord, who instructs us through the Apostle that, so far as in us lies, we should live peaceably with all men; and that we should rather suffer wrong and take injury from a brother in Christ than take the matter before the world of unbelievers and thus risk a general odium upon the Lord's cause.—Rom. 12:18; 1 Cor. 6:7.

We have known cases, however, where dear brethren in the interests of peace and harmony yielded their rights—and properly enough where no principle was involved—but who, nevertheless, held a kind of grudge against those to whom they had yielded, feeling that somehow or other they had been defrauded of their rights. This is wrong, and indicates that the sacrifice was not fully made. If the matter in dispute had been fully sacrificed, as unto the Lord, there would surely have been no room for feeling that it had been taken from them. Under such circumstances the Lord's dear followers would do well to make haste to cast out of their minds anything akin to resentment and the feeling that they had been deprived of their just rights, and, instead, to take into their hearts that they had fully, freely, absolutely given up the matter in the interests of peace and it was dead, buried forever, with no resentment toward any one, but, on the contrary, with the feeling of joy and rejoicing that this matter had been sacrificed to the Lord, to the interests of the home or the church or what not, because they believed that it would be pleasing, acceptable to him, and, therefore, their reasonable service.

We are to remember that we have each but one sacrifice; that it is to be rendered to the Lord day by day in the improvement of every opportunity, as it comes to us, to serve him and his. We are to remember that while it consists of many little sacrifices, some of them too small to mention or even to consider, nevertheless it will require all of these to complete the one sacrifice which we made at the beginning of our induction into his family. When we gave our wills, our hearts, we gave our all; and any holding back in any of the little affairs of life—any refusal to sacrifice that which we think would please the Lord—is a keeping back of that much of what we have devoted to him.

The Lord is very patient toward us, and gives us repeated opportunities to accomplish the work of sacrifice; but

it must be accomplished, our wills must be slain, must be submitted to the Lord's will, else we shall never attain to joint-heirship with him in the kingdom—never become members of the overcoming royal priesthood. He graciously gives us line upon line, lesson upon lesson respecting this subject; shows it to us in his Word from different standpoints, impressing upon us the necessity of being dead to self and alive toward God through Jesus Christ our Lord—the necessity of developing the various graces of the Spirit which are implied in this sacrificing work. Every one who will be a sacrificer must of necessity be meek, humble, teachable, else very shortly he will get out of the way. He must also learn to develop the grace of the Lord along the line of patience, because it certainly requires patience to deny ourselves and to submit at times to injustice where there is no proper means of avoiding it without doing injury to the Lord's cause or to some of his people. It also implies a cultivation of brotherly kindness and, in a word, the development of the whole will of God in our hearts and lives; namely, love, which must be attained in a large and overcoming measure ere we shall have completed our earthly work of sacrificing.

In our studies of the "Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices," we saw that every one who took part in the priesthood was required to wash his hands and feet at the laver. We saw that the laver represented the Word, or message of God, and that the water, therefore, represented the truth; and thus it is the truth which is to cleanse the royal priesthood from the defilements of the flesh. As a whole we are clean, being covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness; but in our contact with the world we are to seek to put away the defilements of earth which come to us in connection with our daily walk and service, represented by our feet and our hands. And the Apostle, in the verse preceding our text, is not forgetful to mention this cleansing which all must have in order to be acceptable as members of the royal priesthood. In the verses 1 to 3 inclusive, he mentions that those who would be royal priests must lay aside "all malice and all guile and hypocrisies, and envies and all evil speakings." As the sacrificings requires all the present life, so the washing requires all the present life; and only those who both wash and sacrifice will be accepted into the glorious royal priesthood of the future.

It will be noticed that the Apostle does not represent that these priests will wash themselves from murders and gross sins, for those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit are necessarily far removed from any sympathy with any of the grosser forms of sin. What he does show is the more refined forms of evil which still infest the flesh, even of those who have the new mind, and which require to be mortified, rooted out, cleansed away. How "close girdling" are these sins that are mentioned—how many of the prospective members of the royal priesthood find that they have defilements along this line, malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, evil speaking! It is safe to say that every one has some, if not all of these weaknesses in the flesh to contend with—especially at the beginning of his entrance upon the priestly vocation. How carefully all should seek to put all these away! how each should scrutinize, not only every act of life and every word and every thought, but, additionally, every motive underlying his words, thoughts and actions, so that they may be more and more purified from the earth defilements and be more and more acceptable to the Lord!

With our very best endeavors we may never get entirely free from all of these "close girdling" sins while still in the flesh; but one thing is sure—the heart must be free from them, else we can never be accepted as members of the glorious priesthood. The heart must be so completely filled with the love of God that it will feel a repugnance to all of these evils, which are repulsive to the divine mind; and happy for us it is that God has promised to accept such a condition of our hearts, and that knowing the imperfections of the flesh with

which we contend, he is not requiring that we shall attain to absolute flesh perfection, but, that we shall be pure in heart in order to see him and to share in the glory which he has promised to his people.

What we have seen respecting the perfect love which must dominate our hearts in order to enable us to complete our sacrifice in the Lord, is not so different from the Lord's requirements respecting all his creatures. There could be no angel of heaven acceptable to the Father without this spirit of love, of devotion, which, if the conditions in heaven were similar to the conditions now in the earth, would prompt and inspire all of the Lord's faithful angels to do good to the needy ones even at the cost of self-sacrifice and inconvenience. We can see that the same law of love must ultimately be required of the world of mankind who shall be developed under the training of the Millennial age, the world's school time. They also must ultimately reach that degree of love which, if the conditions were similar to those which now prevail, would lead them to sacrifice in the interest of the needy. Nothing less than this could be considered as a recovery on man's part of that which was lost—the image and likeness of God.

The peculiarity, then, of this present time and of the church's position in it, is the fact that we are begotten to the new mind, the new will, the new spirit and law of love, while still sin and death prevail around us. Hence to us living under present conditions, in contact with the weaknesses and imperfections and trials of others, it becomes, necessarily, an evidence of the new mind that, seeing these conditions, we should be permitted to make sacrifices on behalf of the brethren and on behalf of all men as we have opportunity. These indeed are severe testings and trials, which will come to the world of mankind during the Millennial age, when all conditions will be favorable to the development of the new mind of love. They are more severe testings also than are brought to bear upon the holy angels, who, although possessing this love, have not the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh, the fallen nature, to contend with in its exercise, and who, therefore can gain no such victory as the church of Christ is called upon to fight for and by the grace of her Lord to win.

It is on this account that the Lord has attached to this "little flock," now being selected under these self-sacrificing conditions, so great a reward; as it is written,—"Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Cor. 2:9) Even though God hath revealed these things to us by his spirit, which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, nevertheless it is not possible for us to comprehend, know fully. As the Apostle says, we now see these glorious things of the future through a smoked glass, obscurely; but by and by we shall see face to face and know as we are known, and appreciate fully the wonderful things which God hath declared to us through his Son and his faithful apostles. Then the royal feature of this priestly office will be added, and they shall be indeed priests, royal, sons of the Highest, and shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

This royalty, while it will have great dignity, majesty and power, is not attracting us by any illustrations we have in earthly royalty, with its pride and often selfishness and pomp and show. It is attracting us, however, by the glorious things which God hath spoken respecting the work of these royal priests—the work of ruling, blessing and uplifting the world of mankind. This glorious hope inspires, encourages and revives the fainting priests who are now sacrificing, and the Lord has so intended. In view of these things let us remember our calling, brethren, and not mistake the avocations of life for the great vocation which God hath set before us in the Gospel. Let us see to it that every day shall witness our faithfulness to our priestly ordination of cleansing, priestly sacrificing, and thus preparing ourselves under the direction of the great High-priest for the glorious work that the heavenly Father has arranged for us in his wonderful plan.

"O ABSALOM, MY SON, MY SON!"

2 SAM. 18:24-33.—NOVEMBER 8.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"A foolish son is a grief to his father."—Prov. 17:25.

Utterly surprised and unprepared for Absalom's unfilial conduct was King David, when he learned of his son's rebellion and realized its extensiveness and how the hearts of the people had been stolen from him by his son's perfidy. He at once perceived that no other course was open to him than that of flight. It was a time of peace, and he had not a large retinue of soldiers at the Capital, but merely what might be termed

a body guard. With these and the loyal officers of the court he fled across the Jordan, where he had time and opportunity to gather a few reinforcements and where he might feel comparatively secure in the small but strongly fortified city called Mahanaim. Meantime Absalom displayed his contempt for his father and his household and thus, so to speak, showed the people that the rebellion was one in which no quarter or recon-

ciliation was to be expected. With a large army which had cast in their fortunes with the rebellious prince and expected under his patronage to reap large results of honor and influence and power as successors to the officers of the kingdom, Absalom pursued King David with haste. There seems to have been no doubt whatever that he was bent on capping the climax of his disgraceful course by the murder of his father. His pursuit with a large army meant this.

Although King David's army was much the smaller of the two, they probably had the advantage in that many of the King's guard were men of special ability and large experience as warriors, according to the methods of their time. The King was persuaded not to go with the army, whereupon he divided it into three parts under three of his ablest adherents. These met Absalom's army, and attacking it from different quarters, the battle resulted in the slaughter of 20,000 of Absalom's forces and the routing of the remainder, including Absalom himself, who, being caught by the "head" in the low branches of a tree, was unhorsed and left helpless, and was slain by Joab, the chief of King David's generals.

Here our present lesson opens. Near the watch tower of the wall of Mahanaim King David awaits news of the battle, while the watchman in the tower reports that he sees a messenger running, and, later, another. The first he recognizes as the son of his friend the priest, and according to the custom of the times he interpreted this to mean that the tidings were good, because a good man had been sent with them. This custom should still be in force amongst the Lord's people—that a good man would always seek to bear a good message. The words of the mouth and the meditations of the heart of all who are loyal to the Lord should be good—only good, ever good. Thus it is that God chooses not the worldly wise neither the worldly great, but those who are loyal at heart to him as his mouthpieces: and it should more and more be recognized that the bad tidings of great misery are not of the Lord, that those who bear them are not bearing the Lord's message, and that if they had the right attitude of heart toward the Lord, and the right spirit of love, they would not have the disposition to bear an evil message which maligns the divine character in a manner that even the depraved would resent if it were charged against them.

When the first runner arrived he announced in a general way the success of the King's army. Then the King—in harmony with his parting words to the soldiers, that they should spare Absalom in any event—inquired first of all, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" As we are shocked with the unfilial conduct of Absalom toward his father, we are deeply impressed with the father love of David for his erring son, who sought not only his throne but his life. What was the difference between the two characters? which was the more noble, the more honorable, the more admirable? There could be but one answer from any quarter on this subject; even David's enemies could not read this record without an appreciation of his grandeur of soul. He was more anxious for Absalom than for his throne apparently—yea, and for his own life. The difference between the two characters can be accounted for in only one way, namely—that David was a man after God's own heart, one who had passed through trying experiences and learned profitable lessons, one in whom the spirit of love had been considerably developed. Absalom, on the contrary, is an illustration of selfishness and ambition which stooped to anything to accomplish its ends. David, although not a member of the house of sons of which Christ is the head, was one of the noble members of the house of servants of which Moses was the head—Heb 3:5, 6.

Some have esteemed that the answer of Ahimaaz was an untruth, intended to soften the facts so as not to wound the feelings of the King; but we cannot agree to this. We hold that, according to the record, the young man told the truth, and we believe that it would be much better for everybody if all mankind similarly confined themselves in their replies to important questions to the strict meaning of the word "know." The reply was that he had seen a commotion, knew that the battle was ended, knew that the victory was on the King's side, but knew nothing more. True, he had heard Joab say something about the King's son, but that was hearsay and not knowledge, and the young man answered the King properly when he said that he did not *know* the answer to the query about Absalom. The Lord's people above all others should be particular to discriminate between knowledge and belief and hearsay, etc.

The second runner, Cushie, or literally a Cushite—that is, a negro—was probably one of the king's household servants who engaged in the battle. He quickly told the whole story, and it was upon hearing thus of Absalom's death that the King was moved to violent grief, and gave utterance to words which stand as amongst the most pathetic on the pages of history. "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

The pity is that the King's love for his son did not take a more practical course at the proper time. He was an indulgent rather than a wise father. Evidently the flash and glitter of the young man's natural talents not only charmed the people but charmed his father, so that he practically had whatever he wanted of everything, the King failing to apply to his son the valuable lessons which he himself would learn, to the effect that the reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that true happiness and true prosperity are only to be found in this path, which wisdom indicates. His unwise love for his son led him to feel that the young man must sow his wild oats and should not be much restrained, and now when he witnessed the reaping of those wild oats his heart was convulsed with sorrow. And so it has been with many a father and many a mother who, although truly the Lord's, fail to apply to their children the lessons which the Lord has taught them by distressing experiences. It is unnecessary to comment upon the unwisdom of such love and to point the moral to Christian parents. It points itself, and Solomon the wise son expresses it tenderly when he said, in the words of our Golden Text, that "A foolish son is a grief to his father," and noted again that "He who spareth the rod hateth his son." From the practical standpoint, however the matter may appear to the superficial observer, the essence of wisdom is contained in his further observation, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Parents seem not to fully appreciate the fact that in the training of their children, either in the right way or in the wrong way, they are laying out for themselves either joys or sorrows for the future.

King David's inquiry respecting his son, "Is the young man safe?" should be the inquiry of every father and every mother respecting their sons and their daughters: but let them not do as David did—wait until sin has sprouted and blossomed and brought forth evil fruitage. Let them begin by realizing their duty toward their posterity in their earliest infancy. The duty of Christian parents toward their children is next to their duty to the Lord,—indeed the Lord has indicated that parental duty ranks first among all the earthly obligations of the saints.

"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD"

PSALM 23.—NOV 15.

Jehovah is my Shepherd, is the Prophet's sentiment, and our Lord's explanation of the matter further is that the great Shepherd's Son has been given full charge of the sheep. (John 10:1-16) Not all mankind, however, are sheep, or have the Shepherd's care. In the present time only those who have heard the Shepherd's voice and responded to his call to become his sheep are of his flock, and his word on the subject is that it is a little flock, to whom it will be the Father's good pleasure eventually to give the kingdom in joint-heirship with his Son, their "Chief Shepherd." Then will come the time referred to by our Lord when "other sheep" will be found. The entire Millennial age, with all the forces and blessings of the heavenly kingdom, will be devoted to the finding of the other sheep. Our Lord's words are,—"Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold [not of the little flock of this Gospel age]; them also I must bring [in due time to a knowledge of the truth and to the full privileges of sheep], and there shall be one flock and

one shepherd." (John 10:16) Eventually all of God's creatures on various planes of being shall be recognized as one family of God, as it is written of our Lord, "In whom the whole family of God both in heaven and in earth are named." (Eph. 3:15) And again, "He shall gather together in one all things in Christ both in heaven and on earth." (Eph. 1:10) However, though it may be interesting and helpful and profitable to understand something of our great Shepherd's generous plans for the future, our interest centers chiefly in the little flock of the present time, to which alone this lesson refers in many of its particulars.

Professor George Adam Smith gives the following interesting description of the difference between the shepherds of sheep in olden times in Palestine and the care of sheep as is known to us of the present day. This is an important point to be remembered, as it was the eastern shepherd who illustrated our heavenly Shepherd's care for his little flock. Professor Smith says:—

"An Eastern pasture is very different from the narrow meadows and dyked hillsides with which we are familiar at home. It is vast and often practically boundless; it has to be extensive, for the greater part of it is barren—in fact, the Hebrew word for desert and for pasture is the same. The most of it consists of dry, stony soil, out of which, for the great part of the year the sun has sucked all life. In this monotony the breaks are few, and consist of paths more or less fitful, gorges or thickets where wild beasts lurk, and oases of pleasant grass and water. Now in such a landscape of mirage, illusive paths, lurking terrors, and infrequent herbage, it is evident that the person and character of the shepherd must mean a great deal more to the sheep than it means to sheep with us. With us a flock of sheep without a shepherd is a common experience: every day we may see them left to themselves in a secure field or scattered over a side hill, with a far-traveling wire fence to keep them from straying. But I do not remember ever to have seen in the East a flock of sheep without a shepherd."

Doubtless as the Prophet David penned this Psalm, his mind went back to his father's flock and to his own experience as its shepherd, concerning which we incidentally have the mention that while protecting it he slew a lion and a bear. Under heavenly inspiration the prophet pictures the Almighty One as the great caretaker watching over and protecting from harm all whom he recognizes as his "sheep." Nothing can be farther from the sentiment of this prophecy and illustration than the growing prevalent sentiment which recognizes Jehovah God as the shepherd and father of all mankind, and which is frequently voiced in the words, "Fatherhood of God, and brotherhood of man." This view ignores man's will and also ignores the Lord's Word, which declares that there are goats and wolves as well as sheep; that while some have become children of God, it is through faith and "adoption," and that many from the divine standpoint, so far from being recognized as children of God, are referred to as "of your father, the devil, for his works you do." (John 8:44) Originally our race, represented by father Adam in sinless perfection, was recognized as related to Jehovah, but the breaking of this relationship by man's wilful disobedience and departure from God is clearly recognized in the Scripture, so that none are recognized as sons of God today unless they have been begotten again, begotten from above. Nor is it our hope that any in the future will be recognized as sons of God or as sheep of the Lord's fold except as they shall heartily renounce sin, and, being granted knowledge of divine grace, shall heartily accept the same and "follow on to know the Lord."

Applying the psalm to the little flock, all of its provisions fit most minutely. Because the Lord is our Shepherd, we shall not want. Those who are proper sheep will submit their wills to the shepherd's will and trust wholly to his guidance, and so doing are relieved of that anxious craving so common to the children of the world and which is never satisfied, but the more it gets, the more it wants. The Lord's sheep appreciate the heavenly things more than the earthly, and their wants in this respect are more than supplied when they accept by faith the divine assurance that

"No good thing will he withhold
From sheep which stray not from his fold."

They have given up every earthly interest in exchange for the heavenly, and, realizing their own insufficiency and lack of judgment, they are trusting to the Lord to grant them such experiences, leadings, trials, difficulties, blessings, etc., in this present life as will be for their highest good, and as would work out for them a share of the glorious things of the future to which they have been called. The wants of this class are not of the kind after which the Gentiles seek, and for which they are anxious and strive. They in their hearts rejoice in the sentiment expressed by the poet, "Jesus has satisfied, Jesus is mine."—Matt. 6:32.

Although the experiences of the Lord's sheep include many trials in the parched wilderness of sin, yet he graciously gives them restful experiences in oases of divine favor. These are not always accompanied with immunities from trial, as the world would view the matter, but certainly are seasons of rest and refreshment—to such an extent that the Lord's sheep may truthfully say that they have "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" ruling in their hearts, notwithstanding outward trials, difficulties, perplexities and adversities. Which of the Lord's sheep has not found such green pasturage of spiritual refreshment in his private devotions and studies of divine things? which of them has not experienced similar refreshment and rest and nourishment from the Master's provision that his sheep shall not forsake the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is—for the study of the Word, for prayer, for testimonies of the Lord's goodness and mercy? All

these opportunities and privileges, whether personally experienced or whether they are yet only in the mind through the medium of the printed page, are provisions made for the sheep by the great Shepherd. Those sheep which find no enjoyment in such privileges and blessings and refreshments have reason to question their faithfulness in following the lead of the Shepherd. And those sheep which, finding such opportunities, decline to use them, thus give evidence of lack of harmony with the Shepherd's gracious intentions and wisdom.

The "still waters" are contrasted with the rushing torrent of the mountain slope—still, not in the sense of stagnancy, but rather smooth flowing. At the latter only could the sheep receive proper refreshment. So applying the thought to the little flock, we find that the great Shepherd leads us away from the strifes of worldly ambition, from greatness and power and riches and honors highly esteemed amongst men, but does not lead us to stagnancy—rather to spiritual ambitions which bring with them a restfulness and refreshment of soul obtainable from no other source. The streams of truth and grace are living, but comparatively quiet, waters. As the Prophet intimates, these are not to be found by the sheep alone; to find them requires the leading of the spirit. Let us give diligence to his voice, remembering his Word—that his sheep hear his voice and follow him. Let us discriminate, discern his voice, with its truthful accent, so different from the voice of error. Strangers true sheep will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. They do not like its money ring, or its worldly ambition ring, or its priestcraft tone, or its contradiction of the spirit of the divine message and method.

"He restoreth my soul." The Prophet does not refer to a restoration of body or of physical health, but a restoration of soul, being. Some of the Lord's most precious saints have been weary and faint and troubled—even the dear Redeemer fainted under his cross, and was neither kept whole or made whole miraculously on the occasion. The application of the Prophet's words to the Christian experience would make these experiences, called restoring of soul or being, to correspond with our justification to life. All our lives were forfeited under the divine sentence, and by faith a complete restitution or restoration of soul is granted to the believer, that he might have something to offer in sacrifice to the Lord, "holy, acceptable" (Rom. 12:1), and that in this sacrifice service he may walk in the footsteps of the great Shepherd who lay down his life for the sheep. Thus are the true sheep led in right paths, in proper paths, advantageous to their spiritual development, though frequently trying and difficult to them according to the flesh. This favor and blessing and opportunity comes to them not for their own sakes or worthiness, but through the Lord's grace—"for his name's sake."

The whole world is walking in the valley of the shadow of death. Mountain tops of life, of affection, were left by the race six thousand years ago, when Father Adam fell from his harmony with God to the plane of sin and death. The valley of sin carries with it the shadow of death, the penalty of sin. In the broad road the whole human family still walks; and even though the Shepherd leads his flock upward, and in the reverse direction from the course of the world, nevertheless, according to the flesh, they are still in the world, in this valley of the shadow of death. However, the true sheep, hearing the voice of the good Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep, have learned to be neither careless and indifferent as are some, nor to be in fear and doubt and perplexity as are the majority. These on the contrary fear no evil. They realize indeed that the penalty of sin is upon the race, but they realize also that divine love has provided a redemption. They realize that the whole world is going down to sheol, to hades, but that God has made provision that the good Shepherd shall deliver his little flock from the power of the grave in the first resurrection, and that subsequently all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth to a full, fair, reasonable, proper judgment—the testing respecting their willingness to be his sheep and to follow him and to attain everlasting life through him. The sheep of the little flock fear no evil because of the Lord's favor, because he is with them, on their side, and has shown his favor in the redemption price already paid. He is with them, too, in his word of promise—his assurance that death shall not mean extinction of life, but merely, until the resurrection, an undisturbed sleep in Jesus. What wonder that these can walk through the valley of the shadow of death singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord, calling upon their souls with all that is within them to praise and laud and magnify his great and holy name, who loved us and bought us with his precious blood, and has called us to joint-heirship with our dear Redeemer.

"His rod and his staff, they comfort me." As the Shepherd's crook was used to assist the sheep out of difficulties, to defend it from its too powerful enemies and to chasten it when

inattentive, and as all of these uses of the rod were for the sheep's interest and welfare, so with the Lord's little flock and their Shepherd and his rod of help, defense and chastisement. The true sheep learn to love the providences of the Shepherd and are comforted by them. Knowing the Shepherd's power and his watchful care, they realize that all things are working together for good to them because they are his sheep. Why should they not be comforted; strengthened, encouraged?

The Psalm diverges here and leaves the figure of the sheep and the Shepherd, adopting instead the illustration of a mighty lord who spreads a sumptuous feast for his humbler friend. In olden times an active hospitality meant much, and for a nobleman to receive one as his guest meant responsibility for his safety; and so the thought is that we, as the Lord's people, are accepted of him, counted as friends, are made to sit down to a bountiful feast, secure from the enmity of those who would injure us—secure from the great adversary and all the wicked spirits in high places mentioned by the Apostle (Eph. 6:12)—secure so long as we are under the care of our great friend, our heavenly Father. The bounties of our table may indeed include some earthly good things, better or worse than those of the natural average man; but all of these, whatever they may be, accepted with joy and thanksgiving, are appreciated by those who recognize them as part and parcel of the bounties of the friend above all others.

All religious people make more or less claim to spiritual food, and the various parts and factions of Christendom especially boast that they have much advantage every way, and that their tables are spread with divine truth, promises, etc., food from which they claim to receive their strength. But what a variety of these tables there are and how different are the viands, doctrinally. The food on most of them seems to have been spoiled in the preparation. Some of it is sad, some of it is sour, and much of it is musty. For the most part it originated in "the dark ages," and the dear friends who sit down to these tables find that they have little appetite for such food, and we do not blame them. Rather, we would attract their attention to the generous, bountiful supply of divine truth which the Lord himself is dispensing to the household of faith, "things new and old," but all of them pure, sweet, delicious, grand. This table is open to all those who love the Lord with all their heart, mind, soul and strength—better than they love houses or lands, parents or children, husband or wife, lodge or society or sectarian system or self.

Is it strange that those so highly favored of the Lord and recognized as his guests and fed at his table should be hated

by enemies? It would seem strange to us if it were not for the assurance of the Master himself, that whosoever will live godly will suffer persecution in this present time, and for the illustration of this in the Master's own experience, that it was the professedly godly, influential, great and nominally religious that persecuted him to death. We are not surprised, then, to find that our table is spread in the midst of enemies that now surround us on every hand.

The anointing of the head of the guest with oil was a part of the hospitality of olden times. The antitype of this with us is the outpouring of the holy Spirit upon all this class—this little flock, the body of Christ, of which he is the Head, Chief, the Shepherd, the Leader.

The fulness of the cup, running over, has a double signification. It is a cup of joy and a cup of sorrow, and in both respects it overflows. He who would partake of the joys of the Lord must also partake of his cup of suffering; we must suffer with him if we would reign with him. But we count the sufferings of this present time as not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed in us, and hence we are enabled to rejoice in tribulation, so that as the tribulations will overflow the rejoicing likewise overflows, and with the Apostle we can say, Rejoice, and again I say rejoice!

The goodness and mercy which we anticipate beyond the veil has its beginning here already and is thus to be appreciated. Whoever knows nothing of the joys of the Lord in the present time will evidently not be prepared for the joys of the Lord in the kingdom, whatever blessings and joys he may attain to under the administration of the kingdom during the Millennial age. There is then joy and rejoicing granted to the Lord's faithful ones, not a momentary matter connected with their first acceptance of the Lord and their consecration of themselves to him. The goodness and mercy of the Lord is not to be looked back to as a thing of the remote past, but is to be recognized and appreciated as a thing of the present. Day by day God's goodness and mercy follow us, refresh us, strengthen us, bless us.

The highest hope to which we dare aspire is that of final union with our great Shepherd, our heavenly Father, and the good Shepherd his Son, in the heavenly state, in our Father's house on high, one mansion or plane of which is intended for the little flock, separate and distinct from the mansion or plane provided for the restitution class of the Millennial age. The end of all our highest ambitions will be attained, and far more than realized, when we shall be like our Lord, see him as he is, and share his glory in the Father's house.

"WINE IS A MOCKER"

PROV. 20:1; 23:20, 21, 29-35.—Nov. 22.

In this lesson wine personifies alcohol, which in one form or another mocks every man who becomes its friend and companion. Realizing this, surely it is true that "Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Evidently many of our race are not wise, for millions are thus deceived, notwithstanding the illustrations they have on every hand of wine's deceived friends, wrecked socially, morally, physically and financially.

The Department of Labor in Washington recently issued a bulletin showing the returns made by employers in various industries in the United States regarding the drinking habits of their employees. Of seven thousand employers who answered the question whether, in engaging employees, they discriminated against men who drank, forty-four hundred replied in the affirmative and only sixteen hundred in the negative. The returns divided according to industries were as follows:—

	Discriminated against	Not discriminated
Mining	56 per cent	44 per cent
Agriculture ..	72 per cent	28 per cent
Manufacturing	79 per cent	21 per cent
Trade	88 per cent	21 per cent
Transportation	97 per cent	3 per cent

About two thousand employers forbade any use of intoxicants by employees of certain grades, and fifteen hundred forbade it when employees were on duty. We quote:—

"It is worthy of note that the grades of work in which employers require that no liquor shall be used are always those entailing responsibility. For example, in agriculture it was the foremen, managers, etc., who were required to be abstainers; in manufacturing it was the engineer, fireman, etc.; in transportation, the trainmen, motormen, etc., conductors and the like. It will be perceived that the trades most highly organized show the most disposition to prohibit the use of liquor. Railroads, for example, stand at the top of the list, and agri-

culture very nearly at the foot, though the temperance sentiment among farmers is vastly stronger than among railroad managers."

The liquor question seems to be less a dispute respecting the wisdom of intoxication and its unprofitableness and more a question of personal liberty. A love of liberty is born in every man, no matter how depraved he may be otherwise, and yet it cannot be disputed that liberty can be used properly only under perfect conditions or under restraints. If all men were perfect, well balanced mentally, and without depraved appetite, and if the surroundings were all perfect, they would need no divine laws. Under present imperfect conditions all lovers of liberty should appreciate the necessity of self-control, restraint of liberty—especially those who, as new creatures, have voluntarily placed themselves under divine instruction. Even those who feel the greatest possible confidence in their strength of will should remember that the will grows stronger by its exercise in opposition, and that where it is not thus actively engaged habit is apt to supplant it and become the master. Furthermore, seeing as we do the large proportion of the human family who admittedly are weak in will power and self-control, and realizing the force of example upon such, those who feel themselves strong, in proportion as they love their neighbor as themselves will feel disposed to forego the exercise of liberties which would have the effect of stumbling their weaker neighbors. A noted writer has said:

"My reader, beware of habit! Habit is the most significant word to be found in the English vocabulary. Get an artist to paint it in letters of fire and hang it on the walls of your chamber, where your eye shall catch its message when you retire and where it may greet you again with the rising sun. Gaze upon it until it is deeply cut into the sanctuary of your inner being, just where the lamp of life may cast its ruddy light over it. Habit is to be your curse or benediction; it is either to conquer you or enable you to conquer. Today it