

ices, before their relatives or acquaintances discover their mental impairment; so they say "They have gone insane over religion." The source may be that in themselves they feel a loss, a sense of insufficiency, and in searching for help turn to any or all forms of faith. I am sure we do not wish to give the demons more glory, credit and notoriety than we can help! Only a week ago a bright, attractive woman was brought to the hospital, and to my usual question: "What do you think is the cause?" put to two of the family separately, the prompt reply from each was, "Russellism." They were shown that

she had been insane seven years before she attended a meeting.

This is the third case in which this cause was given without any hesitation, and in each case the fallacy of the reasoning was made apparent to the relatives. Credulity is such a common weed! and it flourishes because it requires so little to feed upon. But "O, the blest morning already is here!"

Your sister in the glorious hope,

MARY CHRISTIANCY (M.D.).

Of State Hospital for Insane.

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VIEW FROM THE TOWER

The long expected shaking of the social earth is, we believe, already in progress. The great war for which Europe has been drilling its troops, preparing its treasuries and armaments, is shaking every nation of the world, financially, socially, politically. Strong as the nations feel themselves to be, all tremble in dread at the results of the conflict now in progress. Only the Bible can or does speak authoritatively respecting results. In the same breath it tells of disaster and of blessings—disaster to the nations, but ultimate blessings to the people through the new government of Messiah's kingdom.

St. Paul, referring to our day and to present conditions, declares the Lord's message, "Yet once more will I shake, not the earth only, but also the heavens." By inspiration the Apostle informs us that this will be the last great shaking which the world will ever have, because in this troubled time in the early dawn of the Millennium, everything shakable will be shaken and destroyed so thoroughly that nothing will remain except that which is unshakable—that which will fully have the divine approval. The Apostle says that the only thing remaining unshakable will be the kingdom of God in the hands of The Christ—Head and body.—Hebrews 12:18-27.

We should not get the thought that the shaking of the nations is just beginning, but rather that the shaking that has been in progress for some time is now reaching its violent stage. For years Europe has been trembling with occasional violent revolutionary shocks; but now it is preparing for the great shock, the great "earthquake," as the Bible symbolically styles it.—Revelation 16:18.

Knowledge is power. For the past fifty years in particular knowledge has been preparing the masses of humanity, and their power has been growing apace. Proportionately the errors, superstitions and serfdoms of the past have been obliged to yield. A social revolution has proportionately progressed, different in its kind from anything of the past. Socialism is a revolution based upon increase of knowledge, even though, as we shall seek to demonstrate, much of its reasoning is fallacious, and much of its work likely, in the future, to be terribly injurious; in fact, if not eventually overruled by Christ's kingdom, nothing would escape its misguided destructiveness.

NATIONS HURRYING TO ARMAGEDDON

Europe is honeycombed with Socialism, which, like yeast, is fermenting the entire social fabric. Kings and emperors dare not oppose it too openly, and all of their secret intrigues have failed to hinder its development. The general war now begun has inspiration from different quarters. Politics have to do with it—a desire to enlarge national boundaries. Religion has something to do with it—the Greek and the Roman Catholic churches being opponents, the sympathies and prejudices of the people are directed accordingly.

But Socialism is, we believe, the main factor in the war now raging and which will be earth's greatest and most terrible war—and probably the last. Socialism is related to the war by the fact that kings and emperors hope that patriotism and self-defense will cement the interests and sympathies of their peoples, now tending to disintegrate under the influence of Socialism. They would rather risk a general war than face a social revolution.

Already press reports tell us that in Russia patriotic enthusiasm is healing dissension. They tell us further that the differences between the Nationalists and the Ulsterites of Ireland are being forgotten in the presence of the war crisis, which has involved Great Britain. Doubtless the same is true in Germany to a considerable extent. The various political factions are ignoring their differences in the presence of a national danger. Austria-Hungary, four distinct peoples with varying interests and centrifugal tendencies, will doubtless be welded together in self-defense. Similarly, the discontented of France and Italy are having their attention diverted temporarily. For a time, at least, the peace propaganda and the

determination of the internationals to oppose the war is drowned by public sentiment.

THE WAR CLOUD'S SILVER LINING

But after the shock of battle—What? Such a war as is now progressing will surely bring no great victory to any single nation or to any combination of nations. The winners in the war will surely pay a high price for every victory. Civilization, falsely styled Christendom (Christ's kingdom), drenched with blood and terribly impoverished at the end of the war, will have been only partially shaken. The great Armageddon battle of the Scriptures will have been only partially fought. The remnants of armies, returning to their homes sour and discouraged with defeat or costly victory, will be war-sick and mad against their rulers who led to the carnage. Then the great Armageddon of the Bible may be expected. Every man's hand will be against his neighbor. Various factions and parties will proclaim panaceas, and will endeavor to force them upon the public. As a result, foretold in prophecy, "there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."—Daniel 12:1.

The shaking process will continue, the Apostle tells us, until Messiah's unshakable kingdom shall assert itself and take control of the world's affairs. The Lord through the Prophet Haggai tells us this, saying, "I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." (Chapter 2:7) All people really desire peace, joy, happiness, blessing, such as God purposes to provide through Messiah's kingdom. The world really wants what God purposes to give them; but they do not comprehend their needs, and are seriously misled as to the methods by which they might be obtained.

We as Bible students are coming more and more to appreciate the fact that the divine plan presented in the Bible is wonderful in its simplicity and its comprehensiveness. More and more we are coming to see that our error in the past has been that we studied not the Bible, but the creeds—and correspondingly had darkness instead of light.

SYMBOLIC SHAKING AND BURNING

Note again St. Paul's quotation of the Lord's words, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." (Hebrews 12:26) We have seen what the shaking of earth signifies as respects society, governments, social order. In the same symbolic language of prophecy the heavens represent the ecclesiastical systems, as the earth represents the social. The meaning of the Lord's words is, therefore, clear; the coming trouble is not to be merely one upon the world of mankind, but in a very special sense it is to signify a shaking of the church—the ecclesiastical, or spiritual, or heavenly powers.

There are doubtless saints in every church, in every sect, in every party. And these alone constitute the true church, the saints of God—"the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven." (Hebrews 12:23) The masses of Christians of all denominations, according to this prophecy, will be shaken—shaken in faith, shaken from their self-conceit, superstitions and bigotries. Only the true church, only those who are in vital union with Christ, only the saints, will remain unshaken in the strenuous storm described by the Apostle.

While Socialism has been shaking the political earth for the past thirty years, other forces have been shaking with great severity the ecclesiastical heavens. Inquire where we may, we find that not only ignorance and superstition have been letting go their hold upon all Christians, but additionally many of God's professed people have been shaken loose from faith in a divine revelation—many even shaken loose from faith in a personal God. Indeed, it is the habit of Christian ministers to boast amongst themselves that they have lost faith in the Bible—under the influence of what is known as higher criticism, formerly styled infidelity.

Probably not more than one in ten of all the Protestant ministers of the world would today acknowledge that he still holds fast his faith and confidence in the Bible as God's inspired message. The other nine-tenths, if cross-questioned.

would privately admit that they had lost their hold, or been shaken loose, and perhaps would boast of it even in public. Others, through fear of loss of prestige or salary, would seek to dodge the question and give evasive answers.

The shaking has proceeded from the clergy and the college-bred, through the professors and the text-books, down to the high schools, and, to some extent, the grammar departments of the public schools. Everything that can shake the faith of the people in respect to the inspiration of the Bible seems to be at work, and extremely few anywhere are found lifting up their voices and their pens in defense of the divine revelation and a personal God.

Let no one think that the shaking of the ecclesiastical heavens is ended. The Bible pictures the culmination as a sudden catastrophe which will awaken and set free all in Babylon who are the Lord's people—"Israelites indeed," without guile.—John 1:47.

"THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS"

The shaking of the heavens and the earth mentioned by St. Paul, corresponding with the shaking mentioned by the Prophet (Haggai 2:7), is referred to under a different figure in St. Peter's writings. Following the style of some writers of today, who tell us of a general European conflagration, St. Peter describes the end of the nominal church systems of our day under the figure of a fire. The heavens being on fire shall pass away with a great noise—great disputation, confusion, etc.; "the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up," writes St. Peter. "The fire of that day shall try every man's work of what kind it is," writes St. Paul.—2 Peter 3:10; 1 Corinthians 3:13.

Those who have built with gold, silver and precious stones supplied by the divine message and its promises, will survive the conflagration, because their faith and hope and relationship to God are indestructible. But all those who have built with wood, hay and stubble of human tradition and churchianity will find their work utterly destroyed in the fire of that day. All their hopes, all their anticipations, will be utterly gone. "Yet themselves shall be saved, so as by fire." (1 Corinthians 3:11-15) Then he explains that God will save this class be-

cause they have been truly consecrated Christians, who have built their false hopes and wrong expectations upon the sure foundation—Christ and his redeeming work.

The passing away of the present symbolic heavens, or ecclesiastical powers, will leave the place of spiritual control to the "new heavens"—the church in glory. The passing away of the present social earth will give place to the new order of things styled "the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13) The new earth will be this same planet, but under new conditions, new social arrangements, provided by the Messianic kingdom. At that time the prophecy of Haggai will begin to be fulfilled—the portion which declares "the desire of all nations shall come." That new earth condition is pictured by St. Peter most beautifully, saying:

"Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, as before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive [retain] until the Times of Restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-23.

"Soon shall restitution glory
Bring to earth a blessed rest;
And the poor, and faint, and weary
Shall be lifted up and blest.

"Just beyond the coming trouble
See the reigning Prince of Peace!
Lo! God's kingdom now is coming,
And oppression soon must cease.

"Tell how Eden's bloom and beauty
Once again shall be restored,
Making all man's wide dominion
As the Garden of the Lord.

"He's now gath'ring out his jewels,
Those who with him soon shall reign;
And earth's weeping and sad farewells
Soon shall change to joyous strain."

CONTROL OF THE TONGUE A NECESSITY

"I say unto you, that every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."—Matthew 12:36.

Our Lord was addressing some of the scribes and Pharisees who were trying to "catch him in his words"—to take advantage of technicalities of language. In their endeavor to oppose him, those scribes and Pharisees were doing everything they could to discomfit or vanquish him in his reasoning, even going to the extent of using arguments which they did not really believe. This is a very dangerous procedure. No matter how just we think our cause to be as a whole, we are not to resort to any misuse of language to uphold what we believe to be the truth.

Possibly those Pharisees might have said amongst themselves, "We must use strong arguments to keep ahead of that Nazarene. He uses strong language himself. We must hold up our end of the controversy, and not show the white feather." But this position did not justify their conduct. Since justice is the foundation of the throne of God, any attempt to take advantage of another in any manner whatever will surely bring its own punishment.

From our Lord's comments at various times on the subject of the tongue we realize that in his day there must have been some seriously wrong condition prevailing amongst those with whom he came in contact. The scribes and Pharisees attributed evil power to him, and declared that he was the tool of Satan—that Satan was speaking through him, etc. At first our Lord told them in a general way that they deceived themselves. Later, he reproved them severely and showed the fallacy of their arguments. In connection with our text he declared that by their words they should be condemned—be dealt with, corrected in righteousness and brought to true reformation, or else perish in the second death.

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

Human beings are the only earthly creatures that can talk—whether orally or in writing or otherwise. More and more the people of God realize the wisdom of the Apostle James' statement that although the tongue is a little member, yet it is the most dangerous of all, because it has the widest influence. If a man sin not with his tongue, he is a perfect man. (James 3:2) We cannot estimate the possible results of our words. This influence may reach even to the ends of the earth. Therefore we are to consider carefully what we may say, in order to determine whether our words will glorify God or whether

they will dishonor him—whether they will stir up good thoughts and impulses in the minds of others or whether they will stir up that which is evil.

In his wisdom God has seen fit so to create us that our conduct of today has much to do with our character of tomorrow. Thus we are either making or breaking character continually. It is well that all should know this fact. Not only worldly people, but Christians also, should understand this principle; for Christians are now on trial for glory, honor and immortality. Therefore by neglecting to weigh carefully their words they might lose the great prize for which they are striving.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

By way of emphasis our Lord declared that every idle word—every unprofitable utterance—must be accounted for in a day of reckoning. With the church, we understand the Scriptures to teach that this day of reckoning is this Gospel age. Daily are we to go to our heavenly Father and say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us." Not only must we render up our account daily, but at the end of our course there will be a general summing up. By this we do not understand that at the end of our race course we shall be lined up and questioned about every word of our experience, but that each one who comes into contact with the truth is either building up character or else breaking it down, and that his character at the end of his probation will determine his reward. As a pupil daily learns his lessons and prepares himself for the final examinations at the end of the year, when there is a general testing of his knowledge, so with the pupils in the school of Christ. Day by day our Master deals with us; but at the end of our course there is to be a summing up.

Doubtless there are in every one of us some things that are disapproved of the Lord; for we all have the treasure of the new mind in earthen vessels and therefore cannot do as we would. But we have pledged ourselves to serve the Lord and to be loyal in doing his will. Therefore he is dealing with us now. In so doing, he warns us that the tongue is a very important member of our body, and that we are to be careful how we use it; for it will have a bearing upon the final decision in the end of this Gospel age, when the returns are brought in. Then it will be determined whether we are worthy of the highest honor—joint-heirship with our Savior—or whether we shall

be servants to that class or whether we shall be unworthy of life upon any plane of existence.

OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF SLANDER

But there is also a reckoning with us now. Our Lord declares that the tongue is so important a member that it represents our hearts more accurately than does anything else. The hand might do a good deed, yet the heart might be very different from the hand. In fact, the hand might not express the real sentiment of the heart at all. But the tongue is sure to give utterance to what is really in the heart. Therefore by our words we are daily either building up or tearing down character.

There is a spirit which shoots out bitter words. From the standpoint of the Lord, this is murder. Thus at the end of the Jewish age the scribes and Pharisees criticised and slandered our Lord. Although from their knowledge of the law they knew that they would be accountable for their actions, yet they did not appreciate the fact that they would be judged by their words.

So will it be in the world's judgment day—the Millennium. Mankind will be held responsible for the work of their tongues. But they will have a more favorable opportunity than if judged now; forces will then be at work which will give them a more prompt judgment; and therefore they will learn their lessons quickly. They will have a responsibility for their words. Those that “knew not will be beaten with few stripes”; but those who “knew and did not” act according to their knowledge, “will be beaten with many stripes.”

SPECIAL BRIDLES FOR THE TONGUE

Under stress of sudden temptation the Lord's people, who are now on judgment, might impulsively say that which is not pleasing to the Master. But we must learn not to speak thoughtlessly; we must learn to weigh our utterances. Since we are servants of God, we should ever take heed to our ways, in order to render the best possible service. We are not merely to have a good will to do that which is right; we are to seek to bridle our tongues. Whatever vows or resolutions or restraints we may seek to put upon our tongues may be considered as bridles, by which we are determined to bring ourselves into full subjection to the will of God.

So long as Satan and his demon host are at large, the Lord's people will do well to take heed to their ways, that they sin not with their tongue. Satan and his angels are seeking to subvert those who have given themselves to the Lord and to catch them in their words. So while we are in their presence we must be especially on guard, that they may not entrap us. As the Psalmist says, “I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked [One] is before me.”

AN IMPORTANT LESSON FOR ALL

Although our Lord declared that men should give account for every pernicious word, yet he referred to the thoughts behind the words. It was the attitude of heart that distressed him. He knew the attitude of heart displayed by the scribes and the Pharisees would bring injury upon them.

Amongst the Lord's people there is nothing more important than that they should learn to be very just. While it is right to be loving, kind, generous, yet justice is the very foundation of character. All love and kindness not based upon justice are neither satisfactory nor pleasing to the Lord. In dealing with others, a child of God will not think, What will my fellow-men let me take from them? but, What are the rights of others, and what would my heavenly Father have me do?

It is very natural for one to recognize his own rights in any matter, but the fallen nature does not so quickly perceive the rights of others. Therefore one of the most important lessons for the Lord's people to learn is to do unto others as they would have others do unto them—simple justice.

We fear that many of the Lord's dear people have not fully realized that obedience to the rules which govern the new nature means absolutely the “Golden Rule” on their part toward all others. They must not do to others what they would not have others do to them. It is the duty of the new creature to bring the body into such subjection that justice shall rule in every act and word, and so far as possible in every thought. One must be just in his thoughts before he can properly be just in his dealings. Whoever thinks unjustly will act unjustly in spite of endeavors to the contrary.

THE TREASURE STORED IN OUR HEARTS

As we reflect that the church is standing before the Bar of Divine Judgment, under the personal inspection of our Lord, and that in his estimation our words are a criterion of judgment, we cannot weigh too carefully the underlying principles upon which his decision will be made. Our Lord's words, as recorded in Matthew 12:34-36, indicate that both the heart and the mouth are under special scrutiny. How necessary therefore is a right condition of heart, in order that the words of our mouth may be acceptable to our Lord and Redeemer!

In our Lord's statement, the heart is representative of the character, and the mouth is the index of that character. The word heart is sometimes used in Scripture with the force of the word mind. Out of the abundance of the mind the mouth speaks. A good man brings forth good things out of the treasure of his mind. But all mankind are by nature sinners; therefore all are by nature evil to some extent. God does not approve of any who are under the sentence of death. Nevertheless there are those of the condemned race of Adam who are relatively good—those who, despite the imperfections under which they were born, the blemishes of their fallen nature, are desirous of being in harmony with the One who is all-good.

We find nothing in Scripture to support the doctrine of total depravity—to imply that there is nothing whatever of good in humanity. Even though no one is perfect, nevertheless, there are some who have at least a good will, good intentions. Such superior characters of past ages were represented in the ancient worthies—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the prophets of Israel, etc., who fully demonstrated their obedience to God and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness.

THE CLASS APPROVED OF GOD

During this Gospel age also there are some who are good. Amongst the heathen, as well as in Christian lands, there are those who are well-meaning, well-intentioned, those who are not malicious, not striving to do wrong, but endeavoring to do right. In order to have the divine approval in this age, however, one must be of those who come unto the Father through Jesus; for none others are accepted of God. The Father will not receive any one whose heart is not sincere, who does not have good intentions, who does not manifest loyalty to him and to the principles of righteousness.

Therefore any whom we have reason to believe are accepted of God, begotten of the holy Spirit, are no longer to be counted as “children of wrath, even as others,” but as of the household of faith. Despite the frailties of their flesh, they are good at heart; else God would not accept them. With these there is a constant conflict between the new will and the desires of the flesh.

When we come to consider those who are good at heart, we find that all of them have imperfect bodies—some more so than others. Shall we give up the struggle for the prize because we cannot do perfectly? No! The Lord assures us that he looks at the heart, not at the flesh; that he has made a very gracious arrangement through our Lord Jesus by which the imperfections are cleansed away. “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” Therefore all his children may come with courage to the throne of heavenly grace, there to obtain mercy and help in every time of need.

CHIPS OR APPLES—WHICH?

The good things brought forth from the treasure of a good man's heart will be those things which he has stored up from time to time. As the Psalmist says of the godly man, “His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.” And of himself he declares, “Mine eyes prevent [anticipate] the night watches, that I may meditate in thy Word,” law, precepts—the spirit, the purpose of that law, not merely the outward form. So should we meditate upon the spirit of the law of God. The sentiment of our heart should be the desire to get the divine mind as nearly as possible on every subject. All who are eager to be in harmony with God and to attain his character-likeness will think upon things that are good, pure, holy.—Psalm 1:2; 119:148; Philippians 4:8.

As one thinks upon things that are good, the mind becomes stored with good. Wherever there is a mouth disposed to speak upon things that are evil, there is an evil disposition—a mind in which evil has been stored. Whatever one has stored up in the mind will be topmost and sure to be spoken. An evil treasure will show itself, despite all endeavors to hide it; and likewise a good treasure will manifest itself; for the mind can hold only a certain amount.—Luke 6:45.

A father saw his son reading a novel. He knew that his son was in the habit of reading along this line. Calling the boy, he said, “John, I wish you to empty the apples out of that basket, and then take the basket to the woodshed and fill it with chips.” The son did as he was directed. When he returned the father said, “Now put in the apples.” The son replied that he could not do this, because there was not room enough in the basket for both chips and apples. Then the father said, “That is just what you are about to do with your mind. You have been filling your mind with chips; and when you try to put in apples, there will be no room.” Thus it is with all of us. If we fill our minds with jokes, foolish sayings, etc., we shall not be able to fill them with the things of the holy Spirit.—Ephesians 5:1-7.

Many of the Lord's people find that, while their hearts are good, there is in their flesh a tendency for certain things that are not good. Thus there is a continual struggle between the flesh and the spirit as to whether the treasure stored up shall be chips or apples, so to speak. It is for each new creature to decide which shall fill his mind—what kind of society he will choose, where he will go, what he will read, what kind of influences he will come under, what kind he will resist, etc. If in the past he has to any extent treasured up evil things, he should now try to rid himself of them. If his mind has been filled with jokes and levity, things not proper to the child of God, he should seek to put these away.

HOW CHARACTER IS BUILT

Finally, there is a relationship between this laying up of a good treasure in our minds and that of which our Lord spoke when he said, "Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven." In laying up treasure in our minds and hearts, we are building character. Whoever goes into a man's house and sees what he has gathered in the way of treasures can easily perceive the direction in which that man's mind is bent. His preferences demonstrate his character. Thus it is with us all; the things which we cultivate are an index to our character.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DAILY SELF-SCRUTINY

"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."—1 Corinthians 11:31, 32.

In these words the Apostle seems to be saying that if we as Christians should properly criticize ourselves, examine ourselves, correct ourselves, the Lord would not find it necessary to take us in hand and give us judgments, or criticism. But if we fail to do this judging, or criticizing, of ourselves, then it will be necessary for the Lord to do it; for he has taken us into his family, he has made us sons, and we are in the school of his Son, our great Elder Brother, to be trained and instructed. This is our judgment day.

The object of this chastening on the part of the Lord is not to vent his displeasure upon us by causing us pain; but it is as the Apostle states, "that we may not be condemned with the world." We judge ourselves when we criticize our own conduct, our own words—our own thoughts, even—and try them by the principles laid down in the Word of God—justice, kindness, mercy, love. As our Master admonishes us, if we find that we have done wrong, we should leave our gift before the altar—we should first go and make apologies to the one whom we have injured or wounded by any word or act of unkindness or rudeness. Then we may come and offer our gift.

Such a course would be forcing one's self, obliging one's self to do the right thing. It is not enough that one should say, "I know that I was wrong; I should not have done as I did; but, then, I am imperfect; I cannot do just what is right in everything." This course would not be in harmony with the spirit of our text. Our text shows that if we do wrong we have a solemn duty to make it right, to the best of our ability. If we have had an uncharitable thought against another it is not necessary that we go to the person and tell him this; for we might make the matter worse by so doing. But we should judge ourselves in the matter and give ourselves a thorough setting-down. We ought to give ourselves a good lesson, a lasting one. Thus we would be right in heart, in intention, approved of the Lord.

THE PROPER COURSE TOWARD OTHERS

We understand that it is the Lord's will respecting us that we should carefully scrutinize our thoughts, words and actions. If we find that we have injured another with our tongue or in any manner, we should go to that person, and to any to whom we have spoken, and make it right, make proper apologies, putting a penalty upon ourselves—a penalty that we shall not forget. If the penalty requires considerable humility, so much the better. If we neglect to punish ourselves, this would show that we are not in the proper condition; and the best thing the Lord could do for us would be to give us a severe chastisement. This might not come in the same day or week or month. But we may be sure that if we do not do right in the matter, we shall come to the place where the Lord will take us in hand. If he does so, he will give us some trying experiences. It may be that some one will do something unkind to us or say something evil about us, and the Lord may permit this. Or he may allow us to get into a position that would bring upon us some kind of punishment.

The world will be on judgment, or trial, in the next age. If we were of the world, our special judgment would come then, instead of now. We would be making marks upon our character that would require stripes in the next dispensation. But so surely as we belong to the church class, we must receive our

When we come to render up our account as new creatures, character will decide whether we shall be esteemed worthy to be of the Lord's elect little flock. Only those who have laid up the treasure of a character like that of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Pattern, will be fit for an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. Our eternal destiny therefore will be decided by the way in which we now use our minds and the thoughts which we now accumulate. Whoever cultivates good thoughts will receive a blessing, not only in the present life, but throughout the future.

Our first concern, then, must be for the heart—that its affections and dispositions may be wholly under the control of grace divine; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, meekness, self-control, faith, brotherly-kindness, love, supreme reverence for God and for Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles are established in the heart, we shall have no difficulty in controlling our tongue; for out of the good treasure of our heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace.

judgments and punishments in the present age. If we fail to give them to ourselves, our Master will give them to us.

There is another Scripture which says that we are to "judge nothing before the time." (1 Corinthians 4:5) This does not refer to our judging ourselves. We cannot judge ourselves in the sense of passing sentence in our own case; but we should carefully watch our conduct, our words and our thoughts, and deal with ourselves in regard to our own derelictions and our offenses against others. Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." This means that we are to notice this fruitage of life which we see both in our own case and also in that of others—in our brethren, in our neighbors. In our own minds we are to judge and disapprove of evil actions and words. We should say, Is this right or is it wrong? We should be judging such matters all the time.

NOT OUR PROVINCE TO PASS SENTENCE

Every day we see a great many things in life that are displeasing to the Lord. We hear others use vile language or improper language. We see acts of cruelty or injustice. So we can be judging these things as we go through life and getting lessons out of them. This does not mean that we should judge the people who do these things and decide what punishment they should receive. We are neither authorized nor competent so to do. We are not to sit in judgment as to the condition of the heart, except along lines where the Word of God plainly states that we are to judge. Appearances are very often deceptive, and things are not always what they seem to be.

The Lord tells us that the time will come when we shall be appointed judges of the world, but that this time is not now, and we are not to anticipate our work of the future either in our minds or in our words. Nor should we repeat to others what we may see or hear that would lower another in their eyes, save in a case when to do so would be a matter of duty. If we were to form judgments of others and go around telling what we think of this one or that one, we would have a hard time of it and would do an immense amount of harm. Thus we would come under the just condemnation of the Lord and surely bring upon ourselves his rebuke.

While we appreciate the truth of the Lord's words that a good tree will bring forth good fruit, and while we can see many times that there is something wrong in the conduct of certain ones, yet we are not able to judge of what would be the proper punishment for such conduct. We may know that the daily fruitage of a life indicates the condition of the heart, but we are not to pass sentence upon any. The Lord will make this decision. In the Master's words, "By their fruits ye shall know them." He gives us the thought that it is only in regard to that of which we have positive knowledge that we should render a decision in our own minds. We can know that the fruitage of a certain life proves that such a one is out of harmony with God. Yet we would have no right even then to pass sentence in the case. We cannot know what may have led to that unfavorable condition.

"I JUDGE NOT MINE OWN SELF"

In regard to judging in our own case, no one should be so well able as ourselves to know our heart. But St. Paul shows us that we should use a certain amount of leniency in judging even ourselves. He says, "Yea, I judge not mine own self; . . . but he that judgeth me is the Lord." This is not

a contradiction of the words of our text, but his thought seems to be that when we come to realize how high is God's standard, we might be inclined to judge ourselves too severely, not taking into account that we were shapen in iniquity. We might better think somewhat along this line: I realize that I have failed again today to live fully up to what I had hoped. I feel condemned before the bar of my own judgment because of it. But I hope the Lord will be able to make some allowance for me in this matter. I trust he can make some excuse for me that I do not see for myself. I am not sure how much allowance should be made; I am not able to judge myself accurately.

We should then go to our Father in earnest prayer, telling him of our sorrow that we have not succeeded better in glorifying his name. We should plead the merits of the blood of our dear Redeemer, promising the Lord that we will strive to do better, if possible, by his assisting grace.

There are some of the Lord's children who possess only a small amount of self-esteem and who therefore would be inclined to be too severe in their judgments of themselves, and hold themselves to the strictest account for every imperfection.

LOYALTY PROVED BY PROMPT OBEDIENCE

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him."—John 14:21.

The words of our text are a part of our Lord's last discourse to the twelve before his crucifixion. The words, "He that hath my commandments," signify, He that hath received my commandments, and is willing to become my disciple. The mere hearing of the command, or the mere understanding of the command, is not the receiving it. People misunderstand this point. Many hear the command, and yield a partial obedience to it, but they do not receive it in the true sense of the word. This matter of a definite contract with the Lord is a very important one. Those who do not make it are not truly his disciples, have not really put themselves into his hands, and are in danger of shipwreck.

We may know about a certain blessing, but in dealing with the Lord we need to finish our contract. One who merely says, "I will try not to do anything contrary to the Lord's will; I will do whatever he forces upon me," is not in the right attitude to enter the school of Christ. There are certain steps by which we become Christ's disciples. A person may be a visitor at a school, but he has not become a member of the school unless he has met the terms—has accepted the rules and regulations under which the school is operated.

OUR LORD'S LAW OF LOVE

The Apostle Paul says, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace," and yet the Lord speaks of our keeping his commandments. How shall we harmonize these two thoughts? We are to recognize a distinction between the law, the commands which Christ gives, and the Law Covenant, to which the Apostle refers. We are not under the Law Covenant, which required that those who would have its blessings must keep its every requirement perfectly or suffer the curse, death. The arrangement under our Lord Jesus is that if his disciples, those already under his robe of righteousness, seek to do his commandments, strive with their whole heart to do his will, they shall have eternal life through him. The mediator of the Law Covenant was not competent to make any allowance for imperfections.

Our Lord here speaks of "commandments"—plural. We should, therefore, not understand these words to mean the same as when he said, "A new commandment I give unto you"; neither should we understand him to mean the epitomized statement of the law of the Ten Commandments—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." We understand our

Such should try to judge themselves justly. All judgment should be just, even when we ourselves are the culprits. Justice is the foundation of the Lord's throne. We should never lose sight of the fact that we have the covering of the robe of our Savior's righteousness and the Mercy-Seat, to which we should go every day for cleansing from every defilement. But it is not only proper, but indeed a duty that we daily scrutinize ourselves, and see that we keep the body in subjection to our new mind. Thus doing, and thus applying daily, nightly, for the application of our Redeemer's merit to cover our unwitting mistakes and faults, we shall be kept in our Father's love and approval, and shall not need so much chastening from the Lord.

This daily taking stock of ourselves, the discernment of our gains and losses as new creatures in Christ, and of how and where these came to us in our constant warfare with all our spiritual foes within and without, will surely prove profitable to each child of God who takes such account of himself in the fear of the Lord, desiring only to be pleasing to his Father in heaven, to become all that God would have him to be—a saint indeed.

Lord to mean, Whoever receives my teachings, whoever will follow me, will thus be demonstrating that he has love for me; and such I will love. These "commandments" would seem to be the general teachings of the Lord as they bear on all the affairs of life. We do not understand them to be some set, particular statements, as in the 5th chapter of Matthew. He there designates a number of qualities that are necessary—meekness, righteousness, etc.; these are not commanded.

LOVE DELIGHTS TO SERVE

Our Lord's commands are not put in the form of compulsion, but whoever loves him will serve him. Speaking through the apostolic epistles, and in the Book of Revelation, Jesus has given us various expressions of what righteousness is, what love is. Whoever, therefore, desires to be with him, to reign with him, should wish to obey every hint coming from him. There is nothing put in the nature of an arbitrary command—merely the statement of principles. But these become to us commands. To know his will is a law to such as love him—they wish to serve him. This seems to be the divine arrangement for this age—that we should be left without a "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not," so as to prove the degree of our interest and loyalty.

Some of our friends say to us sometimes, Do you think the Lord will reject me if I do not leave the nominal church, or if I do not perform the symbol of water baptism? And we have to tell them they have misunderstood the whole matter. The Lord is merely showing us the line of duty and of privilege, and whoever does not take delight in doing the Lord's will would better not do it at all. The Lord seeks such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. In the Millennial age he will deal with the world through stripes and blessings; and obedience will be compelled. But now he says, Here is my will; you can read between the lines, if you desire. I do not put you under a Law Covenant, but I place before you a great opportunity. If you appreciate the privilege, become my disciple. You will not need to make any boast, but show your obedience, your appreciation—take a prompt and positive stand. I will not insist on anything, then, but will give you the opportunity.

The Lord will take note of those who appreciate his great offer, and when he comes to claim his bride these are the ones who shall reign with him.

SAYING, "GIVE US OF YOUR OIL"

Millions of people have had their attention drawn to the teachings of THE WATCH TOWER and the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES respecting our thought that the time of trouble such as never has since there was a nation is due some time about October, 1914. Eight million volumes of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES are in the hands of the public. Some who scoffed, railed, laughed and talked about the impossibility of our expectations are startled by the suddenness with which the great European war has started. All admit that there never has been such a war before, and that there never again can be such a war. Ignoring the Bible, all admit that the consequences of this war will be so terrible, the impoverishment of the nations so great, that wiser counsels must prevail in the future. We see from the Bible viewpoint that the result of this war will lead up to the wrecking of our present civiliza-

tion in a period of anarchy. Whatever way the war may eventuate, it will surely be unsatisfactory. Discontent will more than ever prevail amongst the masses. A reign of terror throughout the civilized world is to be expected as a result.

All these things we have presented in our publications, sermons, etc., also in the Photo-Drama of Creation, which already has been shown to audiences totaling more than four millions. This war is riveting conviction upon the minds of many respecting the correctness of our expectations. Their question is, "What next?" And they will not think of looking for an answer in the direction of the ministers of the nominal churches, who they now know have been keeping them in the dark and trying to prevent their obtaining the true light from God's Word, as it is now shining amongst the Bible students.

A WORD OF CAUTION

Now is the time for our moderation of thought, speech and manner. When our dear relatives, friends, neighbors and the public begin to inquire of us respecting the horoscope of God's Word, we should be very meek, gentle, patient in our replies. Any haughty manner, any spirit of "I told you so," would be a rebuff to those who are now inclined to look to us for assistance, guidance, instruction in the teachings of God's Word. Sympathetically we should put ourselves in their places and treat them most kindly, telling them that this war is probably connected with the great anarchy which is to follow; that it will probably weaken the nations as nothing else would have done, and thus give the discontented element of society, not only an excuse, but an opportunity, for overthrowing all governments and precipitating the world into the most terrible calamity ever known.

We recommend that the distresses of the time of trouble be not so much discussed as the grand outcome, the Messianic kingdom, to follow. We should help our friends and neighbors to look beyond the dark cloud to the silver lining, assuring them that God's Word implies that the time of trouble is necessary as a preparation for Messiah's kingdom. The plowshare of trouble must first prepare human hearts for the sowing of the good seed of the next dispensation. As we read, "When thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isaiah 26:9.

Let us always remember our ordination, or commission, or authority, to preach—as we read, "To bind up the broken-hearted, to declare the deliverance of the captives." Let the world, the flesh and the devil break men's hearts, if they will. Let the great time of trouble break them, if it will. Our commission is not to break hearts, but to heal them, to bind them up, to pour in the gracious promises of God's Word, sympathetically. The promises are represented symbolically as the oil. Thus shall we best show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:9) Thus shall we best assist those who sadly need our assistance. We must remember that we were equally in the dark but a short time ago, and that our neighbors and friends are no more responsible for being in the dark than we were. It should, therefore, be ours to excuse rather than to berate or faultfind.

THE FOOLISH VIRGIN CLASS

It is not for us to determine who will be of the foolish virgin class and fail to get into the marriage, and thus as a result pass into the great tribulation and get a lesser reward. Nevertheless, we must feel some interest and curiosity in respect to our Master's parabolic prophecy. While it has been true that Christian brethren charged with the cares of this life and therefore not filled with the Spirit, the oil, and lacking the light of the lamp, have repeatedly said to us, "I wish that I could see that as you do," or, "Show me that in a few words," nevertheless they have been unwilling to take the time necessary for proper investigation and the filling of the Spirit. All this is, we believe, still more abundantly true now.

Many of this overcharged class, neglecters of their Covenant of Sacrifice, will be stimulated by the outward signs of our time. Doubtless many of them will study and come clearly into the light and to a fulness of consecration to the Lord's service. Some of these may come in with such fervent zeal that they may be accounted of the Lord worthy of a place in the bride class. Others may come along so slowly that they will be of the great company class, the foolish virgins.

The conclusion of the parable shows us that by the time the foolish virgin class shall have become thoroughly awake, thoroughly convinced of the divine plan, etc., and fully awake to the privilege of their consecration vows—by that time the little flock class will have passed into the wedding, and the door to that glorious privilege and opportunity will be forever shut. The Master is to have but one bride class. The others, therefore, will be rejected and must pass through great tribulation, eventually to come to a glorious place on the spirit plane as the antitypes of the Levites, while the faithful little flock will be glorified as the royal priesthood, with their Master.

The point we would particularly impress is that we should all be praying and striving for an abundance of the fruits of the holy Spirit—manifestations of patience, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love—that thus we may be enabled to render any assistance to those who now will be inquiring. It is a special privilege for us to be the representatives of the Lord and his divine plan. But instead of making us haughty, proud, disdainful, it should make us very humble, gentle and loving, remembering that such honors are not deserved by any of us, but are of the Lord's grace.

THE GREAT COMMANDMENTS

SEPTEMBER 6.—Mark 12:28-44.

"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; and thy neighbor as thyself."—Luke 10:27.

On the question day when the Doctors of Divinity sought to entrap our Lord many questions were asked. A week ago we considered one. The final question constitutes today's Study. A scribe, a man of more than average education, had heard the various questions propounded and had perceived how well our Lord had answered them. Then he essayed a question—quite probably in all sincerity, and not with a view to entrap Jesus. He asked, "What is the chief commandment of all?"—doubtless referring to the Decalogue. Jesus replied that the first, the chief, of all the commandments is, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the chief commandment."

Our Lord here made a quotation from the Old Testament. (Deuteronomy 6:4, 5) How wonderfully comprehensive the statement! Who today, hundreds of years afterwards, could more completely epitomize the great truth of this text? Heavenly wisdom was manifested in its first statement. The same heavenly wisdom was manifested in our Lord's reference to it. He added nothing, because nothing could be added.

Moreover, we are daily seeing more clearly the force of this expression—love. Love is the principal thing! Many in times gone by, according to the creeds professed, might have changed this statement to read that we should dread, fear, tremble; for the Almighty God of the universe, we were told, had a great hell of torture prepared from before man's creation, in which he purposed that the great majority of humanity should be eternally tormented. But that was in the creeds. The Bible stands out distinctly separate from all human creeds and superstitions, and tells us that God is love, that he is the Father of light and mercy, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift.

The Bible, too, tells us of the divine forgiveness, divinely arranged for through the precious blood of Christ from before the foundation of the world. It tells us also that this forgiveness of sins is not merely for the church, the elect, the little

handful now being called out from the world; but that eventually the love of God will be manifested to all of his creatures, to the intent that, coming to a knowledge of that love in due time, they may renounce sin and accept the divine provision—receiving in return under Messiah's kingdom the great blessing of restitution of mental, moral and physical perfection, lost through Father Adam's disobedience.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

Jesus proceeded beyond the question, and declared that the second commandment stands related to the first; namely, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Again we stand all astonished with wonder at how much is stated in very few words. Many a volume is written that contains far less. No other religion than that of the Bible reveals such a God of mercy and compassion, as manifested by his loving provision for the welfare of his creatures. No other religion even hints at love in return. No other religion suggests so high a standard of dealing with our fellow men.

This law of God, now nearly four thousand years old, was probably more or less made known through the Jews to other nations and peoples (Deuteronomy 4:6-8); but none of them grasped its true import. The closest approach to this sentiment is probably found in the writings of Confucius, to the effect that one should not do to others what he would not have others do to him. But oh, what a contrast! One is merely a negative statement; the other is a positive one—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Truly, there is something about the law of God which stamps it as divine. How beautiful the world would be, with all its thorns, thistles and difficulties, if men were only able and willing to live up to these two grand laws—each man loving the heavenly Father supremely, serving him with every power and talent, and loving his neighbor as himself, seeking to serve that neighbor as he might have opportunity! That would be Paradise. Thank God, this is just what we are assured the world will yet be, when the Messianic kingdom is established.

The divine arrangement which provided the death of Christ as an offset for Adam's sin has also provided the reign of Christ as the offset of the reign of sin and death. And the divine promise assures us that ultimately all who love and desire righteousness and truth shall be blessed and perfected, and shall have everlasting life. It assures us also that the earth, God's footstool, will be made glorious, during the thousand years of Messiah's reign; and that eventually all lovers of sin, refusing to make progress in righteousness, will be destroyed from amongst the people in the second death. Thus will the happy day be ushered in for which we have so long prayed: "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven." Then will be fulfilled the promise that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, and the whole earth be filled with the glory of God.

"NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM"

The Scribe was impressed, and conceded the truth of Jesus' answer. He said, "Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is one God; and there is none other but him; and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as himself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

"And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God!" By this the Master meant that the scribe was very near to the point where he might become one of his disciples—one of those waiting for the kingdom, hoping for it, striving for it, preparing for it. It was such "Israelites indeed," in whom was no guile, that Jesus especially sought to gather from amongst the Jewish people, preparatory to throwing open to the Gentiles the door to kingdom privileges. The Jews understood that at his coming Messiah would select a kingdom class, to which would be granted divine power. This is just what Jesus was doing. His words, his teachings, were drawing some and repelling others.

All the sincere, all the honest-hearted, are like this young scribe—not far from the kingdom. If their honesty, their sincerity, lead them to zeal to know and to do the will of the Father, then they will be blessed; for "the secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant."

"GOD LOOKETH ON THE HEART"

The Temple at Jerusalem was still new, and money was needed for its maintenance, etc. The people were privileged to contribute, and apparently did so with willing hearts. However much misled by the traditions of the elders—otherwise the teachings of their forefathers—however confused they were by the misleadings of their blinded Doctors of Divinity, they had a desire to serve God and to worship him. This was manifested by their readiness to bring their money and to cast it into the treasure boxes of the Temple, which stood near its doorway.

Jesus was sitting opposite these treasure boxes, and took note how all classes contributed—the rich of their abundance, the poor of their penury. There came along a widow who put into the treasure box two mites—the smallest copper coins in circulation—each one worth about one-eighth of a cent. We need not assume that the poor widow put this in in an ostentatious manner; for the coins were too small to boast about. We shall assume that Jesus, by divine power, knew the woman, her circumstances and the amount of her gift. He made it a text for a little sermon to the apostles. He declared that yonder poor woman had made a larger contribution in the sight of God than had anybody else who had contributed. To their wonderment he explained that she had practically cast in all that she had—her living—while the others had merely contributed certain portions from their abundance—portions the loss of which they perhaps would not seriously feel.

This little incident shows us the Lord's appreciation of sacrifices and services. It is not the great things that any of us do, or attempt to do, that the Lord highly esteems. The very small affairs of our lives, the very small sacrifices, the very small self-denials, that in the world's sight would be nothing, in the Master's sight will be great, if they denote love, devotion and self-sacrifice to the Lord and his cause.

Moreover, the Lord knew that the woman was giving money to an institution which was repudiating him and which shortly would be destroyed because of being unworthy to continue. But whatever might be the condition of others, the Lord looked at the heart of this contributor and the motive for the gift—"She hath done what she could." For aught we know she became ultimately a disciple. It is of just such self-sacrificing material that the Lord makes disciples.

THE TEN VIRGINS

SEPTEMBER 13.—Matthew 25:1-13.

"Watch, therefore; for ye know not the day nor the hour."—Verse 13.

The parable of today's study is supposed to have been uttered by our Lord about three days before his crucifixion, as part of his response to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the age?" In the preceding chapter the Master traces various experiences of his people down to the time of his second coming—the time of the consummation of this Gospel age and of the inauguration of the Messianic age, the age immediately ahead of us.

In considering this parable, it is proper to notice, first of all, that it has not been applicable at all times and under all conditions. This is shown by the first word, "Then"—at that time—"the kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins." Furthermore, it should be noted that the parable does not describe the world in general, but merely the "virgin" class—the church class—the pure ones who have left the world, who have come to God through Christ, who have been justified by faith in his blood, and who have thus been made prospective members of the kingdom class, the bride class. This parable shows, then, that in the end of this age a separation, or division, will take place, in the true church of Christ, regardless of what may be the attitude of the world or of the nominal church.

With the Jews, betrothal took place between the bride and the bridegroom usually a year before they came together at the marriage feast. During that year the obligations of marriage applied, and any unfaithfulness to the bridegroom vitiated or annulled the contract, which was usually made, not by the bridegroom himself with the bride, but through others, intermediaries. So, during this Gospel age, a church is being betrothed to Christ, and covenant obligations are being entered into in behalf of the Bridegroom, Christ, who is "afar off" and who is now entering into a covenant with those who would be members of his bride class. These covenants and agreements are made through brethren, ministers, servants, of the Lord and of the church.

The Scriptures represent that during the long period between the time when our Lord went away and the time of his return there has been a serious unfaithfulness on the part of

many professing to be of the church of Christ. In the Revelation these are charged with harlotry. We are assured that they will not be recognized, but will be fully repudiated, rejected, at his second coming. But although the mass of those professing to have entered into a covenant with the Lord were foreseen to be unfaithful, nevertheless the Lord just as distinctly declares that at his coming there will be a faithful "virgin" class—pure ones, separate from the world, uncontaminated. It is this class which the parable describes. It shows incidentally that not even all of the virgins will be accepted as members of the bride; but that, in addition to purity, a certain watchfulness and zeal will be considered essential.

PAROUSIA AND EPIPHANIA

Many Bible students hold that this parable began to have its fulfilment in the Millerite movement, which in 1844 culminated in a disappointment. For some fourteen years prior to that time a cry had gone forth throughout the church that the time of the second coming of Christ was at hand. History tells us that many noble characters of all denominations believed the message and, in the strength of their faith, went forth to meet the Bridegroom. But they were disappointed, in that the Bridegroom tarried.

Then all of the "virgins," both wise and foolish, slumbered and slept. A general stupor, uncertainty and drowsiness came over all. Some of them dreamed of strange knockings during that time, too. Later, at midnight, the Bridegroom came apparently, and announcements were made to that effect—"Behold the Bridegroom! Go ye forth to meet him!"

An increasing number of Bible students believe that this latter cry sounded forth just thirty years after the disappointment of the followers of William Miller; namely, in 1874. They do not claim that Jesus came in the flesh then; but, on the contrary, they hold that he is never to come in the flesh—that he is flesh no longer, that he has "ascended up where he was before"—to the spirit plane—far above angels.

These Bible students call our attention to the fact that the Bible distinctly differentiates between the parousia of Christ and his epiphania, at his second coming. The word parousia

signifies presence, without in any sense of the word indicating that the presence is visible. The word epiphania signifies the revealing of one who is already present. These Bible students claim that in the end of this Gospel age Christ will be present, invisible to men, during a period of forty years, doing a work especially in his church—rewarding the faithful, as shown in the parables of the Pounds and the Talents, and receiving the “wise virgins,” as in the parable of our lesson.

With the conclusion of this work of separating the wise virgins, and after they shall have entered into the joys of their Lord by the glorious change of the first resurrection, then will come Immanuel's Epiphania, revealing, showing forth. “When he shall appear, ye also shall appear with him in glory.” “He shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance.” In other words, the revelation of Christ to the world will be subsequent to his revelation of himself to the “wise virgin” class. The world will know that he has taken his great power and begun his reign of righteousness, not by seeing Jesus in the flesh, but by seeing the great time of trouble which then will break upon the world—“a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.”—Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21.

THE LAMPS AND THE OIL

The views of these Bible students are interesting to us. Whether all of their conclusions may be accepted or not, they are at least worthy of consideration, inasmuch as they furnish a new interpretation of some Scriptures not previously understood. Whether they have the times and seasons properly divided is another matter, upon which each individual Christian should use his own judgment. Let us follow the parable from this standpoint; for we know of no other to which the terms and conditions of the parable could be applied.

Let us note that all the “virgins” are to hear this message, “Behold the Bridegroom!”—the expected one has come. It does not follow that they will all hear at once—rather the contrary. During the period of the “cry,” whether it be forty years or more or less, as long as the cry goes forth there will be opportunity to hear it. And all of the virgin class must hear it.

The “oil” of the parable evidently represents the Holy Spirit, while the “lamps” represent the Bible. All of these virgins had the Bible and some light therefrom; but only those possessing the Spirit of the truth in their hearts in good supply would be able to hold out. To the others the Lamp would cease to burn. They would cease to be able to appreciate and apply the Scriptural prophecies relative to Christ's second coming.

ONLY ONE WAY TO GET THE HOLY SPIRIT

The “wise virgins” trimmed their lamps in response to the message—they examined the Scriptures. Like the Bereans of old, they “searched the Scriptures daily to see whether these things be so.” Thus they had light in their lamps, as well as “oil,” the holy Spirit, in their hearts. Then it was that the “foolish virgins” said, “Give us of your oil.” We wish that we could be as earnest at Bible study as you are, but these things are no longer interesting to us. Do give us some of your oil (spirit)!

However, there is but the one way to get the holy Spirit, and that is from the Lord himself and upon his own terms. In order to receive a fresh supply of oil we need to look well

to our covenant with the Lord and to our zeal for him and the truth, to our loyalty to the principles of righteousness. This costs something of time and study. It costs something, perhaps, of neglect of the things of this life. It means to forego strife for wealth and fame. It means to live close to God.

This is the cost of the precious oil which is to give light to those who will have it. Hence the wise virgins declared, in no ungenerous spirit, that they had none too much of the oil of the holy Spirit for themselves. Then they advised their brethren who were deficient to go to God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, and to seek the oil by obedience to his Word, by the searching of the Scriptures and by close following of the Master's leading in the narrow way.

THE SHUTTING OF THE DOOR

Meantime, the “wise virgins” were going in, one after another—passing beyond the veil—until finally the last of the foreordained number had gone in and no more could enter. “Then the door was shut.”

Once in our misunderstanding we thought that this shutting of the “door” after the wise virgin class had gone in represented that all the foolish virgins and all the remainder of mankind were shut out of God's favor—banished to eternal torment. Now, however, we notice that the “door” merely shuts in the kingdom class, the little flock, to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom. While others will never be able to enter into that kingdom, God has other blessings for them, all of which will come through the kingdom class—Christ and his bride.

The parable shows that later on the foolish virgin class get the oil, the holy Spirit, in proper measure and are able to get light from their lamps; that they recognize that the end of the age has come, and earnestly desire, and in prayer “knock,” that the door of the kingdom may be opened to them. But the Lord's answer to them is, “I cannot recognize you. There is only one bride class, and they have already come in to me.”

In view of this, all of the Lord's consecrated people should be earnestly on the watch, filled with the Spirit and having their Lamps “trimmed and burning.” None might know the day and the hour when the Bridegroom would come, in the sense of his parousia; nevertheless, all of the virgins were to be aware of his presence after he had come. Any one who did not know of it would, to that extent, lack the evidence that he belonged to the bride class; even the foolish virgins knew of the Bridegroom's presence.

In the parable the Lord does not tell what may happen to the foolish virgins; but other Scriptures show that they pass through a portion, at least, of the great time of trouble coming upon the world; and that when finally they are received of the Lord, it will not be as his joint-heirs in the throne, but as honored servants of the bride. They are elsewhere spoken of as “the virgins, the bride's companions, who follow her” and who will ultimately be brought into the presence of the King and have an inferior share in the work of the kingdom. (Psalm 45:15, 16) Next in order will come the blessing of natural Israel and of all the families of the earth for a thousand years, for their uplifting from sin and death to righteousness and life eternal—or failing in this, the destruction of the incorrigible in the second death, from which there will be no recovery.

EUREKA DRAMA—CLASS EXTENSION

Read over several times our explanation of this proposition in August 1 WATCH TOWER. We have stated matters there carefully and as clearly as we know how. With each outfit goes an Instructor's Book and a letter giving general explanations of how the DRAMA should be presented. But we would not recommend any to undertake the operation of a stereopticon who has not already some conception of how it should be operated. No fewer than two could operate the DRAMA—one taking care of the phonograph, the other operating the stereopticon. A third person would be desirable as a general overseer, usher, helper, literature-distributor, etc. This EUREKA DRAMA preaching gives the sisters an exceptional opportunity. The Y Eureka might be a little too heavy for them to carry, but any could manage the X Eureka.

We regret the necessity for emphasizing the fact that the full amount stipulated must accompany your order. Only by purchasing for cash can we secure the prices named.

We describe One Part as follows:—

A box of tinted stereopticon slides, encased in a fibre carrying case with handle, 26 inches long, 7 inches wide, 7 inches high, weight, 35 lbs.

One carrying case, with handle, for phonograph and its records and two operator's books, 26 inches long, 9 inches wide, 13 inches high, weight 40 lbs.

One metal carrying case, with handle, containing stereopticon, 18 inches long, 7 inches wide, 12 inches high, weight, 22 lbs.

One fibre case, with handle, containing rheostat, 10 inches long, 9 inches wide, 7 inches high, weight, 12 lbs.

The screen on which the pictures would be shown you can prepare as cheaply as we. For a small room and small pictures a good, large bed-sheet will do. But it would be well to provide at the start a screen about 13½ feet by 15 feet. This will mean 10 yards of wide sheeting and would require only one seam lengthwise through the center and a hem at each end. We can supply these with the outfit for \$3.50 extra.

Rarely would there be need for taking more than one section of the DRAMA (the above four cases) at one time. But if for any reason you desired to take two, it would mean twice the above. Or if you took the entire three sections, the packages would be three times as many.

When you send in your order with the Express or Post Office money order, there will be no mistake as to whether you wish the outfit on the loan plan or on the purchase plan. At the same time specify, please, the state in which you will be working, and the county whose small towns and villages you propose to thoroughly work.

Some inform us that they have stereopticons that will serve their purposes, and wish merely to purchase the remainder of the outfit. Such should indicate this in their order and deduct accordingly from the amount. See itemized statement in last issue.

You have never seen or heard our new portable phonograph. It is very small and light, but powerful. Our records will fill large court room. Some write us that they have suitable phonographs. We advise, however, that our portable phonograph is so cheap (\$8.00) that you would best have it and leave the other for the family or sell it.

EUREKA DRAMAS sent out on the loan plan must go just as we are preparing them, so as to have uniformity. This means a phonograph and a stereopticon with each part and implies the promise that the three parts will be kept busy.

Those who purchase outright may, if they choose, take only one stereopticon and only one phonograph, deducting \$8.00 each for the phonographs and \$20.00 each for the stereopticons and \$6.00 each for the rheostats and \$4.00 each for the Acetylene burners not desired.

Some write us desiring the DRAMA records and musical records only. We are pleased to supply these at the prices mentioned in our last issue with the phonograph, or at \$8.00 less if the phonograph is not desired. Any preferring can order their discs direct from the Columbia Graphophone Co.

You will have the privilege of giving away the free scenario, or of selling the paper-bound and cloth-bound scenario at regular prices—purchasing from us at half price, plus postage or freight. You may handle STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES similarly.

Nothing that we have written on this subject should be understood as intimating that this DRAMA EXTENSION would be a profitable business—nor that anybody should engage in it to the neglect of his or her family duties; nor would it be necessary for those engaging in this work to give it their entire time. Some might be able to give their Sundays, others some week nights, and some both. Of course, some may be so situated that they can give this work their entire time.

We are not recommending this DRAMA EXTENSION work to successful colporteurs. We believe that they already have and are using one of the best methods we know of for serving the truth, and feeding the hungry sheep.

Brethren not heretofore engaged in class extension, here have a chance. Also their wives or natural sisters. If unmarried sisters engage at all extreme care should be exercised that strict decorum and proper Christian dignity be always observed. Preferably only persons professing full consecration to God, and who have taken the Vow, should participate in any way.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

FIRST SOUTH AFRICAN CONVENTION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

The first South African Convention of the International Bible Students Association has now gone down into history, leaving with those who were privileged to attend a glorious memory that will serve as a stimulus and an inspiration until we get to the greatest of all conventions, beyond the veil.

On Friday, April 10, the brethren gathered from all parts of the sub-Continent (one dear sister traveling nearly a thousand miles) to enjoy four whole days of blessed fellowship with the Lord and with one another. We were a very "little flock," indeed. Our largest attendance was 34; but whether in his providence he will ultimately bestow upon us the kingdom or not, the Lord did certainly on this occasion give us abundant manifestation of the sweetness of his presence and the fulness of his love. For four days, from the "Welcome" to the "Farewell," we were on the mountain top with the Lord, and we enjoyed the experience so much that we, too, would fain have built tabernacles to dwell there!

Amid such a plethora of blessings it is difficult to single out any for special mention, but the baptismal service on Friday afternoon was especially helpful. Although we were a small company, I think we made a record on this occasion; for we immersed almost half of the entire convention. Eight sisters and eight brothers symbolized their consecration in the Lord's appointed manner. The hearts of all present went out to them, and our prayers ascended for them, that he who has begun the good work in them, will enable them to finish their course.

In the evening this service was followed by the Memorial, when 32 symbolically appropriated the merit of the Lord's broken body, and, thoroughly furnished thereby, symbolically drank with him the cup which the Father had poured. Our hearts grew solemn as we realized that possibly this might be our last Memorial on this side the veil. We called to mind

We have not proposed furnishing moving pictures for five reasons: (1) Our films are too costly. (2) Only experienced persons can operate them. (3) We are arranging to have full DRAMA shown in the smallest places having Motion Picture theatres. (4) The Class Extension DRAMAS will be kept busy serving villages of under 1000 population. (5) These usually have school houses or union church houses obtainable free.

We hope to have reports from all these EUREKA DRAMAS weekly. Please make them out Mondays. Address I. B. S. A., EUREKA DRAMA, 17 Hicks Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

"EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFIT NO. X

Any of our readers desiring to purchase for his own use the full set of 96 DRAMA lectures (three Parts, two hours each) with nine choice introductory, intermission and closing hymns and a portable phonograph, with a carrying case, can have the entire outfit for \$38.50

"EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFIT NO. Y

This outfit is the one especially intended for the DRAMA EXTENSION described foregoing. Its three Parts require only the same number of lecture and music records as foregoing; but, because of public use, each Part must have its own Phonograph, each Part its own Stereopticon, etc. We therefore show each Part complete in itself, as follows:

Part I. includes one Primo Stereopticon for electric current—Oneida Lens (three for varying distances); special price	\$20.00
Variable Rheostat (five amp., ten amp., or fifteen amp.) may be effective for house current or for heavy current are lights	6.00
Attachment for Acetylene Gas or Presto Light (useful in places where there is no electric current, but where gas can be taken from an automobile tank).....	4.00
DRAMA stereopticon slides, beautifully tinted, with special carrying box and carrying case.....	38.00
One portable Phonograph, one Operator's Book, Lecture and Hymn Records for Part I., and carrying case..	19.50

Total cost of Part I., "EUREKA DRAMA," No. Y.. \$87.50
Additional would be the expressage from Brooklyn.

The Society would furnish posters, window-cards, and free scenario, and would supply the bound scenario for sale in any quantity at one-half retail prices.

Parts II. and III. would cost exactly the same as the above, the entire Three Parts amounting to.....\$262.50

With only one Stereopticon, one Rheostat, one Acetylene burner and one Phonograph, \$185.00. Expressage from Brooklyn extra.

our Lord's words on a similar occasion: "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you." We remembered that the special sufferings followed hard upon "this" Passover, and sought grace to endure a similar experience, if it be his will.

Next morning we had a helpful Question meeting, when many interesting queries were satisfactorily answered. Saturday afternoon a praise and testimony meeting furnishing a general opportunity for witness-bearing to the Lord's goodness, of which the brethren were not slow to avail themselves. The day closed with an excellent address on "The Triumph of Love" by dear Brother Stubbs, of Durban.

Sunday morning we had a modern Berean Study in Volume I., Chapter 5, when the value of this method of Scripture study was amply demonstrated. The lesson was much enjoyed by all. In the afternoon seven brothers participated in a symposium on "The Graces of the Spirit." This stimulated us all, and we feel the need for greater diligence in seeking to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, making no provision for the flesh." Sunday evening was given over to the public, but owing to a heavy rainstorm, only about fifty turned out to hear a lecture on "The Resurrection of the Dead, its Nature and Purpose," although at previous lectures the audiences numbered as many as five hundred.

Monday morning we talked about the harvest work, and considered how best it might be advanced in South Africa. This was followed in the afternoon by a splendid exposition of "The Benefits of Christian Fellowship," by dear Brother Howat, of Johannesburg. In the evening was the farewell meeting of the convention. On this occasion, following St. Paul's argument in Ephesians 6:10-19, we were exhorted to put on the whole armor of God and to fight the good fight of faith, that we might lay hold upon eternal life. Our hearts and our eyes both were full as we filed past brethren representing various classes, to the strains of that old, familiar hymn of hallowed memory, "God be with you till we meet

again," bidding each other farewell, and hoping to meet again in the kingdom, if not before.

What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward us? By his assisting grace we shall grasp more firmly the cup of salvation and, calling upon the name of the Lord, drink it to the dregs.

All the brethren at the convention were filled with a deep sense of gratitude to God for you, dear Brother, and in this I know that we represented the sentiment of all the brethren in Africa. They desired me to convey to you their hearty appreciation of your faithful ministry, and your noble example of fortitude and devotion to the Lord's cause. They wished me to assure you of their loving sympathy with you in the many besetments that necessarily fall to your lot in your exalted position in the harvest-field, and of their constant prayers that he who has brought you thus far will sustain you to the very end of the way and secure for you an abundant entrance into the kingdom. Our loving message finds happy expression in the following Scriptures, which I was instructed to forward to you: Philemon 7; Hebrews 6:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:11, 12.

The first South African Convention shall long remain a hallowed memory, by which all will be stimulated to more fervent zeal for God and to greater activity in the harvest service.

With Christian love to yourself and to all the dear ones of the Tabernacle, I am, dear Brother,

Your brother in his grace and service.

WM. W. JOHNSTON.

A VOICE FROM KOREA

BELOVED PASTOR AND BROTHER:—

I am a stranger to you in one sense; but I came to a knowledge of present truth through your writings just twenty-two months ago. For some time I have been anxious to write and tell you of my special appreciation of the truth, but circumstances did not permit until now.

You will be interested in knowing that I am a Korean. When the first missionaries landed here (in 1885) Korea was a hermit kingdom. Since then some Koreans became identified with Christianity to avoid severe punishment by officials who came under the influence of missionaries who were accustomed to using the rod.

In time some of our people began to read books from abroad that spoke of liberty, civilization, revolution, etc. The missionaries taught that in order to secure civilization and liberty the Koreans would have to become their friends and call themselves Christians.

Many did this; but during the past few years great changes have been taking place. The people have been learning that they cannot be punished unless guilty of wrong, and the sticks of the missionaries lost their power correspondingly.

About five years ago missionaries boasted of 500,000 Koreans who were Christians, but now the number is put down at 110,000. It is said that these are the cream.

For about eight years I drifted through the dangerous currents of what I now see was Spiritism—Satanic teaching. Now I thank God that he sent our beloved Brother R. R. Hollister here with the Glad Tidings and saved me out of these currents which were leading me to an unknown place. My senses were almost lost; it took about six months to have the eyes and ears of my understanding opened. Since then I have consecrated myself to the Lord and continue to praise him.

I felt quite at home up to March of this year—while Brother and Sister W. J. Hollister were with us; but now I am very lonesome, as there are but two of us, one assistant and myself. The snarling "wolves" are about and show their teeth, so to speak. Thank God that he accepts such weak ones as his workers in the harvest field! I pray you will be so good as to remember us at the throne of heavenly grace!

I want to see you—as well as dearly beloved Brothers R. R. and W. J. Hollister and wife—and other brothers and sisters in the truth on this side the veil.

Ever praying the rich blessing of our Lord upon you, and that the end of the way may be crowned with an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom, I am

Yours by his grace,

P. S. KANG.—Korea.

SOME GOOD SUGGESTIONS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I want to express to you my continued love, and to assure you how much I myself and our class appreciate the PHOTO-DRAMA. We are very thankful to the dear Lord for this added privilege of service. There were over 40,000 free admissions here. The DRAMA is certainly wonderful, especially

the record Lectures; and the book form of Scenario does seem about the next best and most direct way imaginable of opening blind eyes. Praise the Lord!

For about a year it has seemed to me very strange that some of the friends are so inclined to question the accuracy of the chronology if certain events do not transpire by or about October of this year. It has seemed to me that the chronology should not be too closely associated with events; that the present Savior did not startle the world with the bright-shining of his presence suddenly in 1874, though he came at that date; that even the Jew was not aware of his favor in 1878, but it began; that Babylon did not feel its rejection, nor topple over in 1881, but was "spewed out" and is no longer recognized, just the same, while even yet, after 33 years, the world is not startled by the evidence, nor does Babylon believe it. Hence I feel that should the present order of things roll on for some time yet, we should not then doubt October, 1914, any more than we doubt 1874, 1878 or 1881. But we should be watchful, prayerful, and "keep our garments," awake to the fact that the chronology may be accurate, while our ideas of how the Lord will order events may be wrong. The Lord may permit seeming inaccuracies to test whether our consecration is to chronology or to him, and he may be as apt to wind up matters very suddenly as to seem to prolong them. Therefore let us have faith, but await his enlightenment as to events.

Affectionately in Him,

S. H. HUSTON.—Texas.

"A GREAT WASTER"

Dear Friends:—

A recent experience has caused me to write you in order that a word of caution may be given those distributing Volunteer literature.

I have just returned from the post-office, one mile distant, and am deeply grieved at finding this year's Volunteer literature scattered in the street, gutters, on the trolley track, run over by every kind of vehicle and soiled and torn. It was evidently thrown from an automobile without being properly folded.

(1) I had previously covered the town with the same literature myself. (2) The local by-law against scattering literature on the street was broken. (3) The Truth was cheapened and its cause apparently injured.

I suppose the distributor thought he was serving the Lord and the truth; but it seems to me that one should have a higher respect for the truth than to allow it to be trampled in the dust through his carelessness. I gathered the literature up as I came home, feeling very much grieved. What would people think of us, and what would the Lord think of us, if we should throw Bibles in the streets in order to instruct the people in righteousness? Our literature represents God's Word. Let us honor it!

Would it not be well for brethren using automobiles and distributing literature to properly fold the tracts and throw them well into the yard, as near to the house as possible? It would also be well to ascertain whether the towns they visit have not been already volunteered and thus avoid duplicating the work and wasting the literature which was made possible by the sacrifice of others.

Your Brother in the Lord, GEO. E. BLAKE, JR.—Mass.

"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS"

Dear Brother Russell:—

I believe many of us would work with greater zeal if we could better realize the opportunities for presenting the truth among those we know. We are apt to think that many have no ear for the message.

Recently I resolved to be more diligent in searching for those who might be hungry for the truth. Accordingly I carried in my produce wagon a supply of BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY, No. 61, displayed more conspicuously than usual, so as to attract attention.

One thanked me very kindly for a copy. I had known him to be somewhat friendly to the truth. Another came to the wagon with Bible in hand, and when asked whether a Baptist or a Methodist replied Presbyterian, but had lately begun to read Pastor Russell's SCRIPTURE STUDIES and was greatly interested in them; adding, "I have gone to my Pastor with some Bible questions that he has so far failed to answer." Another asked my purpose of displaying the papers, and said he had two little books which were very interesting that he wanted me to read. They were TABERNACLE SHADOWS and the HELL booklet. He asked me to bring him Vol. I on the next trip.

In our daily petitions we remember you and the harvest work. Pray for me that I may never look back.

Yours by His grace.

F. M. MORRIS.—Florida.