

Selah

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Selah

*A selection of Meditations
designed for Sisters.*

A Word To Begin

The work now before the reader has been inspired by an obvious need for sisters, married or single, young or old, in the home or in the world, to be reminded of the standards of the Truth as set forth in the Word.

Articles have been selected because of their brevity and simplicity, combined with their exhortatory and meditational value. By so doing, it is hoped that sisters engaged in their necessary daily duties will be able to refresh themselves spiritually, as they enjoy a brief moment or two of rest.

Many things of great value have been written concerning the manner and deportment of sisters. The present selection of material is seen as useful, in that it brings together a wide selection of meditations upon all facets of a sister's walk in the Truth.

Most sections of our beloved Sister Roberts' outstanding work "The Virtuous Woman" have been included. We trust amplification and extension of the several themes therein, will lead to further strengthening of sisters in the warfare of faith as they resist the insidious allurements and pressure of modern society.

The time which remains before the return of our Lord and Saviour appears to be very brief. Therefore let us diligently prepare to attain unto the blessedness of the resurrection and to the glory beyond, by the rich indwelling of the Word of God which can work within us to produce fruit to the glory of His name.

Therefore we must resolve to make an affectionate study of the Word. The guidance and strength derived therefrom, together with the help and comfort of prayer, will fit us to more readily impart the spirit of truth to those whom we desire to nurture in the way of life.

We pray that when the Son of God returns from heaven, he will see in us that which gives him pleasure, and accordingly, he will take us unto himself as his chaste virgin bride.

Therefore, dear sisters, let us "Pause and Consider!"

— Anne Pearce

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Chapter One

Power of Example

The power of a woman's example and influence is extremely great. It was Eve who led Adam into sin; it was Abigail who diverted David from sin. It was the faith of Hannah that resulted in the birth of Samuel, one of Israel's greatest sons; it was the fury of Jezebel that brought depression to Elijah, one of Israel's most courageous prophets. Sisters such as the mother of the Lord, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna "and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance" (Luke 8:3) provided helpful assistance and encouragement in his ministry. They were emulated by Dorcas (Act 9:36), Mary (Acts 12:12), Lydia (Acts 16:14), the daughter of Philip (Acts 21:8-9), and others. Paul, likewise, mentioned with favour the following sisters to whom he sent greetings: Phoebe, Prisca, Mary, Tryphena and Tryphosa, Persis, Julia, the sister of Nereus, Apphia, Lois and Eunice (Rom. 16; 2 Tim. 1; Philemon). He instructed at length upon the work and example of such; and his teaching elevated the womenfolk of the ecclesias to a higher status and dignity than did the philosophy of the ancient or modern worlds. He employed sisters in the service of the Gospel where such was appropriate (Rom. 16:1-3; Phil. 4:3); and guided the elder widows and sisters of experience in paths whereby they could help and support others (1 Tim. 3:11; 5:9-10, 16). He taught that sisters can find an independence in Christ not possible in the world (Gal. 3:28), whilst commending their submission to their husbands as an example of what is required of all towards Christ (Eph. 5:22). He recommended marriage, even for widows, and he praised the joys of wifehood and motherhood (1 Cor. 7:39; 1 Tim. 2:15; 4:3; 5:14), whilst also warning that there are circumstances when it is better "not to marry" (1 Cor. 7:26-29,37). His practical advice to brethren in regard to those sisters who strive to aid the Ecclesia and its labours is, "Help those women" (Phil. 4:3). A wonderful opportunity of service thus opens out to sisters in the Truth. They are called to manifest a co-operative way of life that can be encouraging and elevating to the brethren. Their example will then provide a powerful exhortation to all.

The Virtuous Woman

"Her price is far above rubies" Proverbs 31:10



PROVERBS 31 describes the character of the ideal wife or mother. So wonderful are the characteristics of this woman, that sisters despair of ever being able to attain unto her standard, whilst brethren live in hope that they may find a wife that comes somewhere near the character described.

There is no doubt that *The Virtuous Woman* was no single personality, but the wise man's estimation of the ideal woman, on account of which he elucidates the positive virtues of such a woman. It is also equally true that the woman in question was not as the ordinary housewife of today, but more the supervisor of a large household wherein she exercised control over her "maidens" (v. 15), who would assist in the daily tasks of such an house, making possible her achievements as described.

Sisters in today's society must learn to cope almost single handed in the daily round of household chores and need not despair if they cannot reach unto the ideal spoken of here. Even so, ideals are set that we may aspire to be like them. If sisters give up in their attempts to emulate the virtues of this woman, there is little hope that they will ever aspire to be "like him" who is our heavenly Bridegroom.

In order then that sisters may better understand the virtues set out in Proverbs 31, we list them under various headings, and couch them in language more familiar to our generation.

As A Wife

- She is faithful — v. 11
- Her influence is for good — v. 12.
- She enhances her husband's name — v. 23.
- She earns his love and respect — v.29.

As A Mother

- She controls her household — v. 27.
- She gives careful regard to her children's health — v. 21
- She labours at night for her children — v. 15.
- She is a light sleeper ever ready in an emergency — v.18
- Her children love and respect her — v. 28.

Her Home Management

- She is a good knitter — v. 13.
- She is skilful in all the domestic arts — v. 19.
- She dresses her family sensibly not fashionably — v. 21.
- She dressmakes for others as well as herself — v. 24.
- She is attentive to the need of others, earning her every meal — v. 27.

Her Economic Sense

- She takes trouble to buy well — v. 14.
- She only buys quality goods — v. 18.
- She puts her purchase to good use — v. 16.
- She uses money wisely, and does what she can to improve her return — v. 16.

Her Personal Character

- She is not a weakling — v. 17.
- She has a firm, reliable, honourable character — v. 25.
- She dresses neatly and attractively — v. 22.
- She extends her kindness outside of her household — v. 20.
- She speaks with wisdom — v. 26.
- She speaks with kindness — v. 26.
- She fears Yahweh, her greatest asset — v. 30.

Where among these virtues is there room for the demands of so called *Women's liberation*? Where indeed? All the virtues here listed are opposed to that degrading spectacle of women trying to ape the opposite sex, and achieving nothing more or less than that which Bro. Thomas said would be the tragic result: "In proportion as they rise in assurance they sink in all that really adorns a Woman" (*Elpis Israel* p. 122).

Sisters who pattern their lives on the God given ideal of Proverbs 31 will in no way feel degraded by their loving submission to their husbands, but will find in that subjection is the crowning fulfilment of God's purpose with them. Indeed by their submission they will share the dominion allotted to the man in whom they lovingly and willingly lose their own identity. Again to quote Bro. Thomas: "They will then rule in the hearts of their rulers, and so ameliorate their own subjection, as to convert it into a desirable sovereign obedience" (*Elpis Israel* p. 122).

A Sovereign Obedience. What a wonderful expression. *Queens* by their very *submission*, and so to be *enthroned*

by their influence in the practise of *humility*. May the ideal set forth in Proverbs 31 have its fruit in the lives of Sisters, by being translated into actions, so that it may be said of them: "*Let her own works praise her in the gates*" (Prov. 31:31).

— J. Martin

Where Women Excel



WE hear much in some parts of the world of the political rights and equality of women with men; and of their preaching and teaching in public assemblies. We need wonder at nothing which emanates from the unenlightened thinking of sinful flesh. There is no absurdity too monstrous to be sanctified by unspiritualized animal intellect. Men do not think according to God's thinking, and therefore it is that they run into the most unscriptural conceits; among which may be enumerated the political and social equality of women. Trained to usefulness, of cultivated intellect, and with moral sentiments purified and ennobled by the nurture and admonition of the Lord's Truth, women are "help meet" for the Elohim; and much too good for men of ordinary stamp. The sex is susceptible of this exaltation; though I despair of witnessing it in many instances till "the Age to come". But, even, women of this excellency of mind and disposition, were it possible for such to do so, would be guilty of indiscretion, presumption, and rebellion against God's law, in assuming equality of rank, equality of rights, and authority over man, which is implied in teaching and preaching. It is the old ambition of the sex to be equal to the gods; but in taking steps to attain it, they involve themselves in subjection to men. Preaching and lecturing women, are but species of actresses, who exhibit upon the boards for the amusement of sinful and foolish men. They aim at an equality for which they are not physically constituted; they degrade themselves by the exhibition, and in proportion as they rise in assurance, they sink in all that really adorns a woman. *Elpis Israel*

A Godly Woman's Etiquette



MUCH has been written concerning the position of woman by those who look at her from a merely secular point of view. Her rights have been discussed; they have been advocated, they have been vindicated, or they have been denied according to the temper of the writers who have taken her case in hand.

But to the woman professing godliness, these utterances amount to nothing for practical guidance. She may, sometimes, allow herself to be entertained by them, but she will not take her cue from such sources, lest she be led astray. To her there is but one standpoint from which to view her own position, and from which to judge what is becoming and dutiful. To the Scriptures of Truth she must turn for guidance. In them she must find her "model", her manual for direction in all the affairs of life, her book of fashion, and her instructor in true etiquette.

The world's etiquette is mostly the beautiful form of emptiness, or worse. A godly woman's etiquette will be without dissimulation. Her love will be genuine, springing from principle rather than the impulse of partiality, which will render the service of her hands more graceful, engaging, and acceptable than all the elegant posing of her deluded sisters in the flesh. Having, by the belief of the glad tidings and union with Christ in baptism, placed herself under law to him, the object of her greatest solicitude will be, in all cases, to ascertain the will of Christ concerning her ways. It matters little to her, and ought really to affect her little, what any outside of His law may think of her; and, indeed, she must not even allow the opinion of her brethren and sisters to unduly influence her conduct. *Christ first*, must be her motto, and the desire to please him must be the guiding principle of her life. She must make up her mind to encounter difficulties.

— Jane Roberts

The Service of Sisters



AUL has said, "let your women keep silence in the ecclesia: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law". There is a tendency with some to drive this doctrine to an extreme. I have heard some speak contemptuously of the sisters as "mere women, only fit to nurse babies, and look after the pudding". Against such a doctrine every true brother will earnestly protest. It is not only degrading to her whom God has given us for an "helpmeet", but it is inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel which teaches that there is neither male or female in Christ; that we are all *one in Christ Jesus*. It is probably the natural extreme of the theory which flourishes on the other side of the water and is equally to be reprobated in Christ. The one puts women too high, and the other most certainly too low. Paul commends to the attention of the Roman ecclesia in chapter 16, one Phoebe, a sister, whom he distinguishes as "a servant of the ecclesia at Cencrea". This implies a prominent, active position on the part of the sister in question. He further distinguishes her by making her the bearer of the epistle to the Romans of which, for a time, she was the sole custodian. He entreats the whole Roman ecclesia on her behalf, saying of her that "she hath been a *succourer of many, and of me also*". In the next verse he mentions another sister — Priscilla, as one who had, with her husband, for Paul's life, laid down her own neck. In verse 6 he sends love to "Mary, who bestowed much labour on him". Further down he salutes, among others Tryphena and Tryphosa, Julia, and the sister of Nereus, and the mother of Rufus. This is a standing apostolic recognition of the high place which sisters may fill in the Lord, if, in the grace of God, they have wisdom sufficient. True, there are not many such, but that is a misfortune of our times, and not a necessity of the thing itself. It may account for the cynical view of some, but ought not to be allowed to justify an unnatural, mischievous, and unscriptural theory. Sisters are never likely to develop into noble servants of Christ if the door is shut in their face, by a theory which would consign them to cradles, pots and pans. I do not mean to

suggest the cradles and pans are incompatible with higher duties any more than are hammers, shoe lasts or baking troughs of their rougher brethren, but a doctrine which would tie them all the time to these, is an offence and a mischief. It is the part of true nobility to shine in the performance of the humblest duties. We will not say "stoop" or "condescend," because there is no stooping in the case. These humble duties, which are the most important in the economy of life, become exalted in the hands of intelligence and worth. But to insist on confining sisters to these, would be to ignore the fact that they have brains as well as bodies; and that men have other needs of help-meetship beside those of knife and fork. Such a boorish doctrine would destroy companionship, where brethren need it most, and unfit their wives to fulfil the highest function of motherhood, which is to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In fact, it is a doctrine to be opposed and detested as much as any hurtful doctrine may be. Jesus marks the position of women in a very distinct manner, and on more than one occasion, He rebuked Martha for her zeal in the very department where our friends think women ought exclusively to shine.

He commended Mary for her preference for spiritual things and spiritual society. To "the women" he first appeared after his resurrection, and sent his first message to the disciples through them. Shortly before he suffered, one showed exuberance of her affection by anointing him with expensive ointment. A certain brother standing by (John 12:4), who probably thought women were "only fit to look after babies and puddings", said, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" It was a hypocritical plea, for the speaker, who "bare the bag", was a thief, and sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Hypocrites always oppose the deeds of righteousness under pious pretences. How did Jesus receive his very proper, very prudent, very judicious protest against such useless "extravagance"? He said, "Let her alone: why trouble ye the woman? she hath wrought a good work upon me. . . . Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done be told for a memorial of her" (John 12:5; Matt. 26:13). And

wheresoever during the past eighteen centuries these apostolic records have been read. this incident has been made mention of to the credit of a woman — a sister — a beloved Mary. who very likely put all her spare money into the act.

If a sister is an intelligent, active, useful, noble servant of Christ, her being a woman is no disqualification or barrier; it only precludes her from the act of public speaking, and involves subjection to her husband. It does not shut her up to babies, pots and pans, though these will dutifully receive the right share of attention at her hands. She is a partner, a helper, a fellow-heir in all things pertaining to Christ.

But of course, there are trying women, women of no sense, or perhaps little sense with a clattering tongue — just enough to comprehend the trifles — smart in a small way, with large relish and capacity for the small things of life. They may even talk about "the truth" in the glib fashion in which they talk about Mrs. Jones. Such women are not sisters, though they bear the name. Such women may covet the respect shown to real sisters; they cannot get it. They may envy the appreciation and love exhibited towards true Marys, but they can no more get what they want than a farmer can reap harvest who does not sow in spring. They may steal a little by surprise, but stolen goods have to be given up with bitterness. Insuper, petty, gossiping, garrulous, spiteful women are amongst the most grievous nuisances of creation. The great superabundance of them has probably led to cynical extremes against their sex; but it does not exclude the fact that there are noble daughters of the Lord God Almighty, nor does it justify the refusal of the right position to such when happily they make their appearance.

For both men and women, there is a place in the Kingdom of God. Though they neither marry nor are given in marriage, we may depend upon it that God, who never makes mistakes, has a place in the higher state for the companionship arising out of the natural and radical differences between man and woman as constituted in this preliminary state.

This is one of the sweet secrets we wait to see disclosed. Meanwhile, they stand related to the same rules of admission. Each must be faithful to Christ in their

several spheres. The man must be enlightened, believing, courageous, trustful, prayerful, and obedient; and the woman must be no less in her contracted circle aiming particularly at those active, repeated, and untiring good works in the Lord which obtained for sisters of old the approbation of the Lord and the praise of his apostles. Thus may they earn for themselves a good degree which will shine forth with glorious lustre in the blessed ages that are to succeed the present evil world.

— Robert Roberts
— *Seasons Of Comfort*

Example



CHRISTIAN women should not copy after the god-aspiring Eve, but after Sarah the faithful mother of Israel, who submitted herself in all things to Abraham "calling him Lord". Nor should their obedience be restricted to Christian husbands only. They should also obey them "without the word"; that is, those who have not submitted to it, in order that they may be won over to the faith when they behold the chaste and respectful behaviour of their wives produced by a belief in the Truth.

Their wisdom is to be quiet, and to make their influence felt by their excellent qualities. They will then rule in the hearts of their rulers, and so ameliorate their own subjection as to convert it into a desirable and sovereign obedience.

Such are the statutory provisions enacted in the world's constitution at the beginning, with respect to the position of women in the body social and political. Any attempt to alter the arrangement is rebellion against God and usurpation of the rights of men to whom God has subjected them. Their wisdom is to be quiet, and to make their influence felt by their excellent qualities. They will then rule in the hearts of their rulers, and so ameliorate their own subjection as to convert it into a desirable and sovereign obedience.

—*Elpis Israel*

Chapter Two

Communing
With
The Father

Prayer is an act of communion. Through it we discourse with Yahweh. He speaks to us when we study His Word; we speak to Him when we respond in prayer. Prayer is always linked with the Word. The lamps were tended in the Holy Place, at the time when the incense was burned upon the golden altar. When prayer and the word are our daily delight, we experience, in measure, what Moses experienced in the Tabernacle "And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with God, then he heard the voice of One speaking unto him from off the mercy seat that was upon the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim; and he spake unto Him" (Num. 7:89). Moses directly conversed with God. What a tremendous act of condescension on the part of Yahweh; what a great privilege to hear His Voice! We can do this when we blend the study of the Word with Prayer.

The Word will enable us to look at life, including our own problems, from the standpoint of God and thus will assist us to pray as we ought. Unless the mind is prepared by the Word, we do not know the particular thing, or failing, for which we should be praying. The Word, however, enlivens the mind in spiritual matters, and revealing to us our true state before God, develops in us the wisdom to pray for help when and where it is needed.

What a tremendous privilege it is that we have freedom of access through Christ unto the King of heaven. Let us appreciate, treasure, and use this privilege.

The Power of Prayer



WOMEN will find prayer to be a very important element of success in overcoming difficulties. There are many instances on record of women who feared God, and whose prayers were heard and answered according to their requests. Their lives were like our own, made up of the common place and ordinary occurrences of daily duty in the household. The desires and aspirations that animated their breasts were the same as animate ourselves. They were subject to like passions as we are; were like ourselves encompassed with weakness; yet their prayers were heard, because they put their trust in God. When we call to remembrance the examples on record where help was visibly vouchsafed to those who prayed to God in the hour of need, we do well to consider whether we individually take full advantage of this blessed privilege. True it is that the promises of God belong especially to the nation of Israel; but are we less Israel than the Israel of old? Do we not know that by our obedience to the truth, we are adopted into the family of him to whom the promises were made, and are therefore no longer aliens, but of the household of faith? This we do know, and ought therefore to live up to the fact that God is to us the Hearer and Answerer of prayer.

We cannot come to the door of the tabernacle or the temple with our offerings, like the women of old. We have a new way of approach, even the Lord Jesus who is at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens: our high priest and intercessor. We are assured by those whom he sent to spread his name, that all who come unto God in this new and living way, will obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. This we have on the authority of Paul (Heb. 10:19-20). How often we feel that this is just what we want — a refuge in the time of trouble, "help in the time of need!" Surely, amid the accumulating cares of life, feeling oftentimes the need of wisdom to guide, of courage and strength to pursue the steady path of duty amid conflicting elements, we shall do unwisely if we neglect to retire to our closets and make our requests known unto God. He will

hear us when we pray, for He cannot lie, and He has said, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me" (Psa. 50:15; Heb. 13:5-6; James 4:8). Paul also encourages the same attitude of mind toward God. He says, "In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2).

Many prayerful songs of thanksgiving are on record, of those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious and full of compassion. How delightful to rejoice before the Lord with such a song of thanksgiving upon our lips as this (Psalm 28:7):

*"The Lord is my Strength and my Shield;
My heart trusted in Him and I am helped;
Therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth;
And with my song will I praise Him."*

Let the adopted daughters of the house of Israel, in these latter days, follow the example of the holy women of old, in supplicating the Most Holy in whatever matters they have need; let them accept the help of God, and let their songs of thanksgiving ascend. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and are safe." (Prov. 18:10). With such a strong refuge, they may trust to be sustained.

Jane Roberts

There is no exhaustion of God's power. He takes charge of the great things in our lives and undertakes for us in the smallest matters also. There are a multitude of mercies with Him; and abundant answer will be given to all our pleadings (Psa. 69:15). Whatever waters of sorrow or temptation we may sink into, whatever floods of trouble may seem to overwhelm us, let us persevere in prayer.

Hannah's Prayer



CONSIDER Hannah's example. Her story is well known. Hannah longed for a child, but it was denied her until after much prayer she was granted her request, and received the desire of her heart. She was to become a mother and so fulfil the wish of every woman in Israel. Motherhood was particularly desirable in Israel, for the covenant promised that the "seed of the woman" would bruise the serpent power, and every Godly woman desired to contribute to that end. So Hannah hoped and prayed, and hoped and prayed again, until, in the goodness of God, her ardent ambition was realised in the birth of little Samuel.

Did Hannah then, in her excess of joy and the love that she poured out upon the child, forget her obligations to God? By no means! Having experienced the goodness of Yahweh in the birth of Samuel she turned to Yahweh in fervent thanksgiving. More, she attempted to repay God, and so endorse the genuineness of her thanks, by a most generous act of unselfishness: she gave the child back to Yahweh. Her thanks were endorsed by sacrifice. Yahweh's gift to her found response in her gift to Yahweh.

What a wonderful example. We often pray for things; do we remember to thank God in return when the prayer has been answered? Thanksgiving is a gracious act of recognition of benefits received. What is the normal reaction to circumstances when a generous warmhearted deed that has been unselfishly done for another is taken for granted, or is received coldly, or with indifference? Is it not one of hurt? Is it not a divine command that we "in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5:18)? Let us be warm in our expressions of thanks one to another; and above all to God.

H.P.M.

Effectual Prayer



NO man will reach the kingdom without prayer, and prayer to be effectual must proceed from lips which are sincere and upright (Psa. 145: 18). God will not hear those who keep not His commandments (Prov. 15:29; Psa. 66:18). The prayers of the disobedient are worse than useless, they are an abomination in God's ears (Prov. 28:9). Let us then examine ourselves, and pray simply, fervently unceasingly. Let us pay no heed to the objections of men who tell us that prayer is beneath the notice of a Great Creator, that it is superfluous, and, if answered, would mean a violation of Nature's laws. Till the Bible is demolished we can afford to leave such objections severely alone. The Bible is full of encouragement in the matter of prayer. Hannah prayed for a child, and got one (1 Sam. 1:11,20); Abraham's servant prayed for a good wife for Isaac, and met with a favourable response (Gen. 24). Much that is beyond the power of finite man to see and grasp has to be taken into account before his prayer can be answered. We sometimes forget this when things do not go just as we would wish. Let us remember, too, that this is a day for walking by faith, and that all prayer is answered in harmony with this divine arrangement.

A.T.J.

Prayer ought to consist chiefly of three things: The expression of our sincere adoration of God's greatness and excellence; the giving of thanks for His goodness, as multitudinously manifested, both to the race and ourselves individually; and supplication for the various things we need, among which stands, first, the consummation of Yahweh's purpose in the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David, and all that that involves.

The Privilege of Prayer



WE have this assurance: "The effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). And again, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). We do believe it!

Therefore we have confidence and receive strength from the very act of sending forth our petitions in prayer.

It is apparent, that while we who have learnt and accepted the way of truth are privileged to be able to approach the Father in prayer and be heard, we can also lose this privilege. A solemn thought! The children of Israel provide our example. They were God's chosen people and privileged to present their petitions to Him. Yet we read in Ezekiel 20:1-3 of the time when God would hear them no more. "Are you come to enquire of Me? As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you." And the reason is stated clearly in Isaiah 29:13: "This people draw near to me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart from me." So John exhorts us, "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue (as did Israel), but in deed and in truth." "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

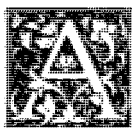
It matters not when or where we send forth our prayers, God will hear them if they proceed from the heart. Nevertheless, there is a suitable mode of addressing Him. Solomon exhorts: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God. . . . be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few" (Ecc. 5:2). Jesus emphasised this principle in His *Discourse on the Mount*, and gave us the perfect prayer as an example — in five short verses! We must remember our position. Vain repetitions, extravagant language, and a dramatic style do not impress God.

What a responsibility, then, is attached to this wonderful privilege of being permitted to approach the

Throne of Grace in prayer, assured that our prayers will be heard. By this means, we draw near in faith, make known our desires, and gain thereby strength, courage, and help in time of need. By its means, we honour His great Name, in rendering praise and thanksgiving for the many wonderful blessings showered upon us every day.

E.B.W.

Guiding the Children



AFTER herself, a mother's spiritual solicitude will be for her children. The question has sometimes been raised whether we ought to teach our children to pray? I am persuaded that with a thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures, such a question never could be raised. We have the apostolic injunction to bring the children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In what way are we to carry out this injunction? What shape shall our instructions take? We shall tell our children of God's wonderful works in the days of old, of His goodness to those who trusted and obeyed Him; of His wrath and power manifested upon wicked men who feared Him not; of His goodness to us, that everything we have and enjoy comes from Him; that He makes the sun to shine and the rain to fall, that we may be supplied with food from the good things which the field and garden yield. Telling them of these things which come on the just and unjust alike, shall we omit to tell them of the time, close at hand, when He will send the Lord Jesus Christ to establish a glorious state of things upon earth, in which only those will share His love, who obey and trust Him now? If there be any preference, it will be shown for the unsearchable riches to which our children, equally with ourselves, may attain. Such daily instruction will not fail to

provoke within them a desire to be among those whom God will love and bless in the day of the manifestation of His sons. This desire will find expression in their talk. We delight to hear them express such desires to ourselves, shall we restrain them, if they wish to express them to God? We teach them to thank an earthly friend who bestows upon them a gift, and consider it a breach of good manners if they omit the ceremonial, and shall we teach them to be less respectful to the Heavenly Giver of every good thing? To this it is said by some, "but the children are not in a position to approach God; none but those who believe the truth and have been immersed, can acceptably pray to God." Regarding the eternal relationship of sons, this is true, but shall we shut them out of the relation that is actually theirs? They are creatures of His hand. They may thank Him for their being as such. They are possible candidates for sonship. They may, like Cornelius, present their aspirations in prayer to be guided into that relation. Shall we forbid a child to say? "O Lord, I am a poor child of the dust. I desire to be an heir of life everlasting, through Christ, Lead me into the way," If a sinner's "Lord be merciful to me a sinner," was heard, who shall shut the mouth of an instructed child who is daily progressing to maturer knowledge of divine things? Much hurtful neglect has come from wrong views on this question: or rather the mis-application of a right view.

We know that God heareth not sinners, and that the prayers of the wicked are an abomination to Him; but the children of believers are not of that class. The *sinner* and the *wicked* of these statements are of that class that are given over to transgression, and it is with reason that they should not be heard; but our children are the seed of the righteous, whom the Lord has promised to bless. They are the children of the household, and are being prepared, in order that they may become acceptable worshippers when their understanding is sufficiently developed to comprehend what is required of them. Meanwhile, when their hearts are stirred to thank Him for the good things they enjoy, for the food they eat, and for the comforts of home and the beautiful world outside, let us not restrain their thanksgiving; but rather teach and encourage them to acknowledge God in all these things. Christ took an interest in the children when he was upon earth, contrary to the expectations of his disciples, who sought to prevent the

mothers intruding their children upon his attention. He took them up in his arms and blessed them, and surely he would be pleased now with the effort to develop their minds in a direction pleasing to him. God himself we are told, hears the ravens when they cry (Psa. 147:9) and the young lions roar after their prey and seek their meat from God (Psa. 104:21). If He is mindful of the inferior creatures of His power, doubtless He will regard those to whom a higher destiny is offered.

Jane Roberts

Man is small and life is short, and the issues of futurity are immeasurable and can only be truly judged by unerring wisdom . . . For this reason all our petitions should be qualified, recognising the will of God as the supreme Regulator. We should in everything give thanks and in all our petitions subordinate our own ideas and wishes to the perfect will of God.

Children And Prayer



HALL we teach our little ones to pray? This question, for a reason easy to explain, has troubled many a God-fearing parent.

Worship according to the Scriptures, is the privilege of the saints; none else is invited by God to share in it. Such being the case, the troubled ones have asked: Is it consistent with the divine institution to instruct unbaptised children to pray?

Dr. Thomas contended that, in view of the scriptural conditions which are attached to acceptable worship, children should not be asked to pray (*Herald* Vol. 2 page 23, Vol. 9 p. 132). Bro. Roberts thought it permissible for them to do so; provided the children were made to understand that they had *no spiritual relationship whatever*; that their approach to God was simply that of creatures to a Creator (*Ambassador*, Vol. 3, 184, 185 *Christadelphian* Vol. 20, 177). When we ponder the scriptural argument of these two brethren, we have for our own part to confess that God has neither invited prayer from any out of Christ, nor directly forbidden such approach. Let those who say they follow Bro. Roberts in teaching their children to pray be careful to heed the qualifications he mentions. God is not pleased with words uttered unintelligently, nor "the mere mutterings of unreasoning animals". Prayer must ascend from minds instructed and obedient. Both Bro. Thomas and Bro. Roberts counsel, in harmony with God's own arrangements in Israel, that the children should be kept near to witness our religious exercises (at the meal table and in our assemblies) but especially should they be encouraged to become true worshipping saints by learning, believing, and obeying the Truth.

Prayer and Praise

*Yahweh Elohim, name of the Just,
The name Thou wilt give us tho' born of the dust,
Precious Thy promises, gracious Thy love
Leaning towards us from Thy throne above.*

*Strengthen Thy children, now called to be Thine,
Fill them with the spirit of Thy truth divine.
Guide them in travail and lead gently on,
Casting all care at the feet of Thy Son.*

*Father our hearts yearn to know Thee aright,
Born into darkness, but led into light,
Open our minds as we study Thy Word
And pierce our hearts deeply with Thy Spirit's sword.*

*Name of the glory to Moses revealed,
Known to Thy loved ones, to others still sealed,
Teach us Thy mercy and pour out Thy Truth,
Grace be our fellow, may love be our booth.*

*If error assail us, O help Thou our need
Humble us, search us that, our every deed
May spring from a true faith, strong, healthy and pure,
All glory be Thine Lord Thy purpose is sure.*

*Help Thou our weakness, and in it make strong
The power of Thy spirit may this be our song,
Sow thou within us, deep down in the soul,
Thy praises, Thy glory, may we these extol.*

*And never may pride with its fellows all vile
O'er us be the victor but quench evil guile
Clothe us in armour to fight the good fight
And that won, O Yahweh, clothe with Thy might.*

Sis. Betty Flint.

Keeping Company with Christ



THE sister will be assisted in her determination to consecrate herself to Christ, by the daily reading of the scriptures. Other reading wisely selected may have a useful place, but the reading of the scriptures she ought to regard and practice as an imperative duty. Let her at all hazards read some every day; this will to some extent be keeping company with Christ himself, for he is the great theme of the sacred book. He is the beginning and ending of it. To him all the types and shadows point. In him is centred all the hope of the future glory foretold by the prophets. He is the burden of their theme. In the narratives concerning his sayings and doings while on earth, there is the opportunity of making close acquaintance with him, whose meat and drink it was to do the will of Him who sent him. By the study of his gracious words, may she be purified and assimilated to his divine character, and greatly aided in her resolve to devote herself to knowing and doing the will of her Father who is in Heaven.

She cannot keep him company personally like the sisters who ministered to him in the days of his flesh; but she will know that there are many ways in which she can keep him company. As long as he has brethren and sisters, and the truth is in the earth to be countenanced, encouraged, and served; she will remember that he has said, whatsoever is done faithfully to one of the least of his disciples, he regards as done to himself. She will therefore have plenty of ways in which to show her love to her absent Lord, by the keeping of his commandments. She will want as much time as ever she can command for gaining the knowledge of himself, and the Father's glorious purpose concerning him which the scriptures reveal in all the manifold aspects in which he is therein represented.

Jane Roberts

On Reading The Bible



LET your reading be private, individual, and at the right time of day. Reading with others is good in its place, but cannot serve the purpose of private study. The mind cannot, in company, settle to the subject with that thoroughness of grip that is needful for thorough results. Do your Bible readings by yourself, whatever luxury you may indulge in with your friends. And let it be at a time when your faculties are wide awake. To put it off to the last thing, just before going to bed, after your pith has been spent on other things, is not doing justice to yourself or to God. A little extra Bible reading at such a time, such as a psalm or a chapter from the epistles is very well as a soothing finish to the day, but to leave your whole Bible reading till then is to attend to it under conditions that almost preclude the possibility of your getting the intended good.

R. Roberts

The Bible Companion is a bond of fellowship among brethren and sisters throughout the world. All who use it are within the space of twenty-four hours, reading the same words, guided into the same channels of holy thought, moved in ways which can find expression in related prayer, made strong before the throne of grace because they speak as one.

Seeking Spiritual Success



WITHOUT the daily reading of the scriptures, and meditation thereon, there is no chance of success in the endeavour to put on the new man. There is so much in us by nature to hinder and oppose the work, that we shall certainly be defeated if we do not use amply the aid within our reach in this life-long struggle. First of these aids is the diligent and attentive reading of the Word daily. Do not allow a day to pass without reading. You may think it does not much matter, or that you can make it up by reading a double portion tomorrow. It matters a great deal. In the first place, you miss the sustaining power for the day which you would have had if you had read, and you also miss the closer communion with God himself which is brought to you in His Word; and the comfort and strength you will have enjoyed in the company of those who are undoubtedly presented to us in the Scriptures as the approved of God. Then if you try to read up, you cannot well digest so large a quantity of mental food; you are liable to have more than you can deal with in one day, and some of the precious words are sure to be overlooked. By far the better way is to read every day, and all the appointed portions if you can. They furnish variety and profitable food for thought by day and also by night, if you happen to have any waking moments. The daily reading of the Scriptures need not prevent you from reading other books that would be helpful to you; but be sure that what you read is really helpful.

I have heard of some professing the truth to make a practice of reading light literature, novels and periodical publications of a sensational character. I cannot, my dear young sisters, too urgently beg of you to refrain from so injurious a habit. You might as well put poison into your food and expect to enjoy good health, as to indulge in such mental food and expect the spiritual welfare of a saint. If you are in earnest about securing Christ's favour, you will not hesitate to cut off that fleshly lust. You will feel repaid for doing so by the much greater ability you will possess to concentrate your mind upon the scriptures, when unclouded by the highly wrought images of merely

fictitious and sensational stories, which only unfit the mind for grappling with the realities of life. What a very different effect is produced upon the mind by the reading of any of the histories recorded in Scripture. You feel stimulated by them to courage and perseverance, even in the most obscure occupation of life, because you have your faith quickened in the direction of things unseen at present. You are reminded that your efforts are not in vain, though no human eye witnesses them. God regards those who fear Him, and has their names in remembrance. You are helped by the record of what others have done in the name and in the strength of the Lord, to realize that you also may be thus helped and, in due time, acknowledged. You find the Scriptures, when you really give your mind to the study of them, in harmony with human experience, and suited to every day wants and necessities. If you are joyful, you find full expression to your joy, and a solid foundation for it. If you are sorrowful, you find in the Scriptures that sympathy and perfect response which you can find in no other book, and a comfort which alone can touch the unapproachable sorrow of an overwhelming affliction.

By Jane Roberts (read by her husband). At a tea meeting of young sisters held in Athenaenum Hall Thurs. Dec. 29th, 1881.

Three-fourths of the popular novels of the day enfeeble the intellect, impoverish the imagination, vulgarize the taste and style, give false or distorted views of life, and human nature, and, which is worst of all, waste that precious time which should be given to solid mental improvement.

Logos Vol. 1

Daily Reading



How many Christadelphian homes is it still the practice for the host to say to the casual Christadelphian visitor, or the week-end speaker, "Have you had your readings today?" and for the guests to answer truthfully, "Not yet, but if I had, it would be a pleasure to repeat them. Let us have them together." There are still some such homes, but there are not enough. We could do with being thoroughly old-fashioned about this. When we meet in one another's homes the Bible should be out, the readings read aloud, and, (for why should our praises be limited to public meetings), why not hymns sung once again around the piano? It would be good for our singing, and good for our spiritual health.

*O how love I Thy law, it is my meditation all the day.
Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser
than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.
I have more understanding than all my teachers, for
Thy testimonies are my meditation.
I understand more than the ancients, because I keep
Thy precepts.
I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I
might keep Thy word.
I have not departed from Thy judgments, for thou hast
taught me.
How sweet are Thy words unto my taste, yea sweeter
than honey to my mouth
Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I
hate every false way.
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my
path.*

Psalm 119:97-105

Setting An Objective



E must have purpose in our reading. So many read the Bible aimlessly. They do it as a duty, or, perhaps, because they love the Book. But they are not seeking for something as they read; they have no plan in mind. They do a lot of reading, but they gain little knowledge.

For years I have adopted a practice in Bible reading that I have found to be of great help. I follow the *Bible Companion* reading chart, but I am always searching for references to support other subjects. Each year I decide upon a subject, and any time I come upon a reference to it in the daily readings, I note it in a book that I always have with me. In addition, when a new book of the Bible is commenced, I might set myself the task of looking for references that show how that particular writer treats with a specific subject. This task has a twofold effect: (1) I dare not miss a chapter in the daily readings in case it contains some reference to the subject I am following; (2) The reading becomes intensely interesting, like a treasure hunt, for I do not know what each day will bring forth. No longer does my mind wander on to other things; I read with a purpose in mind, and thus have to concentrate on the matter in hand.

One year, I set myself the task of noting all the places in the Bible where reference is made to the House of Prayer to be erected in Jerusalem, in the Age to Come. Each verse was carefully scrutinised for hidden or open references to this subject, with the result that I not only found many references to the Temple that I never knew existed previously, but I also derived much more pleasure and profit from every verse I read. I next wrote all these references out in full in a book (there were well over a hundred of them), ready to sectionise them; and as I did this, my knowledge of the subject was advancing all the time. Instead of the Temple being something vague and indefinite, it assumed shape and substance in my mind, and became a thrilling subject to think upon. On another occasion, when commencing to read the Prophecy of Jeremiah, I decided to take note of all references made therein to the future of Israel. Again the result was a

revelation, as I pondered verse after verse. As an example, consider Jeremiah 3:21 to Ch. 4:2. This Scripture undoubtedly refers to the future redemption of Israel as the context clearly shows. But when these verses are carefully considered, what a revelation they give. Notice v.22, and the invitation of Yahweh: "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." Notice the response of Israel in that day: "Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art Yahweh our God" (v.22). Notice the recognition of past blindness, and the humbling of themselves before Yahweh, and confession of sin in vv. 23-25. Notice the conditions then set before Israel for their acceptance again into favour, contained in Jer. 4:1-2. So there is built up in the mind a graphic picture of how Israel will be grafted in again, at the appearing of the Messiah; a picture that when linked with other Scriptures becomes more boldly defined in outline.

The first essential in the pleasureable and profitable study of the Word is to have an objective, and aim for it. Do not read this wonderful Book aimlessly. Always have a subject in mind when you turn to it. Always have a notebook and pencil at hand as you read. If you find a verse you do not understand, make a note of it, and do not be satisfied until you have an explanation of it. Set out to cover a subject, or to study in detail a whole book. By these means your pleasure and profit from Bible study will grow, and you will come to delight in that which previously may have been a boredom to you.

H.P.M.

The Bible never grows stale, also does not open its treasures to the careless and casual reader.

The Best Time for Reading



THE morning, or at least early in the day, is the most suitable time, so far as profitableness is concerned. The mind is more free to receive impressions than when the business of the day is in full swing. At a later period, the mind is generally too pre-occupied to give it that close attention which is necessary. And again there is this advantage in reading early in the day, that the mind is sustained throughout the day's occupation by the impetus received from the reading. The duties of some may not admit of morning reading. Each must wisely determine for herself at what time of the day she can best secure the benefit. Once the practice is begun, it is necessary to persevere. For this some determination is necessary. Put not off your reading to a time when, from preoccupation or weariness, your mind is unfitted to profit by the exercise. It may not be always practicable for the married sister to secure her reading at the same time or hour of the day; still, if she persevere in the attempt, even in spite of hindrances — the presence of little ones not excepted — she will be astonished at what she can accomplish, and will surely secure the prize, and reap enduring benefit.

Unfavourable circumstances may be turned to excellent account in this way. It has not infrequently happened that a mother with a young infant has secured more opportunities for reading, than under ordinary circumstances, because she has snatched her book whenever she sat down to suckle her baby, and so availed herself of an opportunity to increase her knowledge which might not otherwise have presented itself, and which is overlooked or thought impossible by many. As her family increases, her ingenuity in this matter will be brought into play. She will devise ways and means for continuing this most indispensable aid to sustenance in the path of life. Persevering in it, she will the more and more easily continue to secure the privilege of reading, because, as time goes on, she will learn to prize it above all price, and to regard it as a thing as necessary as daily food. She will find herself trained at last, to forego something else rather than lose her reading.

Jane Roberts

Chapter Three

Adornment

The real secret of charm is not purchased with money nor contained in external embellishments.

“Beauty of mind is beauty of Face,

And inward sweetness makes outward grace.”

The cheerful countenance, the noble brow, the sunny smile the compassionate eye, who is not attracted by these powerful charms? A happy face may be a very plain face, but who, with discerning judgment of these matters, would exchange it for the soul-less artificial beauty, so called, of the vain daughters of men? “Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that fears Yahweh she shall be praised” (Prov. 31:30).

Virginia Vigilant

Fashion



THE fashion of the world is ever changing. but that does not permit us the liberty of setting our affections on the changing world and its fashions. Nor is it to be denied that in recent years the pendulum of dress and style has swung toward the borderline of vulgarity, bringing blushes to the cheeks of the prudent. There is an attempt to cheat truth by dressing so as to disguise age, and mothers have externally spurned their matronage and bedecked themselves as their daughters! There is an excess of time and thought devoted to personal adornment. making it apparent that many opportunities are bestowed on that which is "pleasant to the eyes". If senior sisters take advantage of the world's goddess, what can be expected of the younger members? They promptly annex the licence exhibited by the elder sisters. And, again, how much observation and no small amount of comment is sometimes expressed regarding the new attire of sisters present at the breaking of bread meeting. The memorial feast tells that these are the days of our fasting in the Master's absence, and we need to remember that Israel was rebuked by God for finding pleasure when they professed to be fasting. All these things were written for our admonition and learning, on whom the ends of the ages are come. Often and often the prophets were directed to condemn the excess of external beauty which the women of Israel indulged in, and the Apostles declared how the holy women were to adorn themselves. Sisters have great powers of good, and in view of the Lord's approach, we believe it would be acceptable to him if they abandoned the world to its own follies and study that separateness or holiness without which none shall see the Lord.

From For Christ's Sake

Modest Apparel



THE subject of dress is a theme constantly touched upon in Scripture. Apparently the form of adornment of sisters has frequently been a matter of concern. Through Zephaniah, Yahweh declared: "I will punish all such as are clothed with strange apparel." Rotherham renders this: *foreign apparel*, that is, Gentile dress!

The immodest extremes current among Gentiles today are surely foreign apparel as far as Christadelphians are concerned. Therefore, we must heed the warning exhortation of the prophet that Yahweh declares that He will punish all such as are clothed therewith. The people of God are called upon to be restrained in their ways and habits. As Yahweh's peculiar people, consecrated to His service, Israelites were required to be most careful in dress. They were commanded to attach to their garments a fringe of blue, to remind them of their heavenly calling. This border encircled their feet so that they walked within its bounds; teaching them that their spiritual "walk" should be governed by the restrictions of the law. The instructions are recorded in Numbers 15:37-41: "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue; and it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of Yahweh, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye used to go a whoring; that ye may be holy unto your God. I, Yahweh, brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God".

In very dress, the Israelites were called upon to exemplify the holiness of Yahweh, and show that they obeyed His commands. Do we display that in the clothes we wear? Moses declared that Yahweh brought the children of Israel out of Egypt to be their God, and, He required them to be holy or separate because He is holy.

The instruction of the Law is supplemented in the Epistles. Paul and Peter write to some extent upon this

theme. Peter points out that the true adorning of a sister, and one which will commend her to both God and man, is "the hidden man of the heart....the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" (1 Pet. 3:1-6). He calls upon sisters, and particularly upon wives (and Peter was married — 1 Cor. 9:5) to seek to appeal by the beauty of their character, and not by a lavish, gaudy display of jewelry, nor by conspicuous, immodest dress, nor elaborate latest hair styles. Not that sisters need or should be dowdy; in fact they grace their position by looking neat and pleasant; but in the choice of dress, ornaments, hair styles and so on, they should be guided by the principle that the chief and basic adornment must be the Lord Jesus, and that external dress etc. should be in keeping with the sweetness, simplicity, purity, meekness and quietness of spirit of the follower of the Lord. The dress of such a person will be attractive without detracting from Christ, whose excellence of example she will manifest.

Paul likewise commanded: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety which becometh women professing godliness, with good works" (1 Tim. 2:9). Each of these expressions is worthy of consideration in the light of current fashions. "Modest apparel" is *becoming apparel* according to the *Diaglott*. It is dress that is becoming to one understanding and professing the doctrine of God manifestation, or Godliness. God manifestation is the revelation in action of Divine characteristics.

"Shamefacedness" is better rendered *in modesty or with reserve*. It is the very reverse of that attitude which hankers to follow the latest fashion, no matter what it requires.

"With sobriety" is from a Greek word signifying *soundness of mind*, and judgment. It denotes dress that is selected by one whose mind is exercised upon the Word, and desires to please her Lord in all things.

Certainly the provocative dress of today does not answer to that description, and because it does not, it should be avoided by all who desire to please Christ. Again we stress, that we are confident that any who may have followed the fashion in modern dress, have done so out of

thoughtlessness, and doubtless this reminder will be sufficient to cause them to aim for standards set by the Word.

Unfortunately, in Israel, the women ignored the appeal of the Law and the Prophets, and pleased themselves. Consequently they felt the full force of Divine judgment that destroyed the State and ruined many families. Isaiah indicted them for their rebellious ways: "Moreover Yahweh saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk holding their heads high, ogling with their eyes, walking with mincing steps, their anklets jingling, therefore on that day the Lord will deprive them of their finery, of anklets, tiaras, necklaces, ear-rings, bracelets and veils, headbands, armlets, sashes, scent-bottles, charms, signet-rings and nose-rings, robes of state, mantles, shawls and purses, gauze, linen turbans, and wrappers. For scent they shall have stench, for ropes they shall have girdles, instead of curls they shall have baldness, instead of silk they shall be in sackcloth, instead of beauty they shall receive the brand of slavery. . . ." (Isa. 3:16-24 — A.V. and Moffatt).

For a time, these women in Israel continued on their way completely indifferent to the requirements of the law or the appeal of the prophets. They preferred to please themselves. They stood before their mirrors and admired the beauty that they saw reflected therefrom, they did not see the hidden ugliness of the heart: the spirit of rebellion that made Yahweh sad and angry. The day came however, when they learned to regret the folly of their actions. It was the day of judgment, and they were held accountable for the manner in which they had defied the requirements of Yahweh, and had influenced others to do likewise.

A day is approaching when all matters shall be brought into judgment. Paul, commenting on this wrote: "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Cor. 5:11). How much better it will be for us in that day, if we heed the exhortations of the Word now. The words of Moses, Isaiah, Zephaniah, Paul and Peter, remind us that Yahweh is not indifferent to the way in which we conduct ourselves in relation to current fashions, and we appeal to all to give an example of consistency in that regard.

It Will Show on Your Face

*You don't have to tell how you live every day,
You need not reveal if you work or you play.
A trusty barometer's always in place
However you live it will show on your face.*

*If the Truth, or deceit, you would hide in your heart
They'll not stay there long, once given a start
For sinews and bones are like thin veils of lace,
What you wear in your heart you must wear on your face.*

*If your life is unselfish and for others you live —
Not what you can get, but how much you can give,
If you've lived next to God, in His infinite grace,
You don't have to tell, it will show on your face.*



"And Jezebel painted her face and tired her head." How often she is noted throughout the Scriptures as a character of abomination. Her family characteristics have increased. Her offspring are now numerous. Do they even enter the sanctuary of God's House? Let each consider and beware! A more obedient ruler than Jehu is about to appear! Compare, and consider well Isaiah 3:16-24.

The Dress of a Young Sister



AN engrossing concern with young Sisters naturally is their appearance and dress; and excess in mere outward adornment is among their besetting sins. The young sister is at liberty to adorn herself; but she must be careful to have her ornaments chosen and adjusted according to the fashion book inscribed by the spirit. This requires that she be richly adorned with good works, and modestly attired as regards dress. If she be rich in good works, she will of necessity cripple her ability to gratify the fleshly desire to be richly apparelled outwardly, which desire, if indulged, would cripple her ability to adorn herself spiritually. If she be moderate in her expenditure upon herself, she will doubtless be able to have something to expend in the service of Christ. He asks of her the first place in her affections. If she loves him, and at all appreciates the high destiny to which he has called her, she will make it a rule to let his claim have her first consideration in all matters. To begin early in life thus to train herself, will make many things easier of accomplishment in years to come, than if she should live the best part of her life, and then begin to try to crucify the natural desires.

Jane Roberts

Use thy youth so that thou mayest have comfort to remember it when it hath forsaken thee, and not sigh and grieve at the account thereof. Use it as the springtime which soon departeth, and wherein thou oughtest to plant and sow all provisions for a long and happy life.

True Beauty



T is still painfully true that the world sees nothing either in Christ or His Words. The beauty and harmony of the scriptures is overlooked, and that which tastes as sweet as wafers of honey, and is like fresh oil to those that love Christ, is distasteful and unpalatable indeed to those who reject Him (Num. 11:8). They of the world still enquire: "What is it?" And still to the incredulous Jew "There is no form nor comeliness" but in the approaching dawn, the Branch of the Lord's planting will be glorious in their eyes (Isa. 4:13).

Neither Christ or His brethren have any of that beauty which the vulgar eye admires, nor any of that external glory which ambition courts; and we look forward to the time when man's renovated taste will recognise what true beauty is, for the regenerated heart will see that it is not looks, nor outward appearance, but thoughts, desires and deeds, that are beautiful in the sight of God. It is moral beauty that is real beauty: external and material beauty is only a transient type, an evanescent shadow of that which is real and enduring for ever, therefore, to us, Christ even in His humiliation is altogether lovely, and our All in All. True beauty is all from within and not from without, for under a very fine form there may lurk a very bad heart. It is the inner work that is beautiful. It is the light, radiance and warmth of the inner man shining from the countenance that constitutes true beauty. May the Lord grant us the beauty of holiness and the adorning of a meek and quiet spirit.

Lessons From Nature — Alice Hopkins



Chapter Four

*Heirs Together
of the
Grace of Life*

*Man is for strength, judgment and achievement;
Woman is for grace, sympathy and ministration.
Between them they form a beautiful unit:
“Heirs together of the grace of life.”*

Robert Roberts



The Bride



AUL wrote to the Ecclesial members at Corinth: "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (2 Cor. 11:2). The natural, then, is a basis for

the spiritual. On her espousal, a young girl busies herself in preparation for the coming marriage. She prepares her trousseau chest, and it is expected of her that she shall remain faithful to her espousal, that she shall remain pure and undefiled, her chastity inviolate, with no other associations than the one of her espousal. Paul in Eph. 5:1-7 appeals to the espoused members of Christ's Ecclesia that they "walk in love, as Christ also has loved us," but fornication (i.e. unchastity before marriage) and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints: Let no man deceive you with vain words (as so often is the case, both naturally and spiritually), for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. "Be not ye therefore partakers with them."

The faithful remnant of the espoused has busied herself in preparation for the coming marriage. Her trousseau chest is being filled with good works, and a character developed along lines well-pleasing to the Husband-to-be. Her chastity has been maintained and she refuses to be enticed or cajoled into unlawful associations with any other. So that, when the Lord Jesus Christ comes to claim His Bride for Himself, it will be said of her: "His wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7; 21:2). By the union of the Bride and Bridegroom in the Marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7) they will be made one. In the marriage union the espoused Bride will be clothed with her house from heaven 2 Cor. 5:1-4, and thereby will be "born of the Spirit." The union will be complete, and she shall be "like Him" (1 John 3:2-3). Together they will rule in the Kingdom Age of 1,000 years.

As we consider these marvellous joys which are held in store for the faithful among the Ecclesia, can we be anything but inspired to greater purity of faith and life? The unfaithful, in the day of her glory, is pictured as being

“arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked (margin—gilded) with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornications” (Rev. 17:4). Compare this frightful picture with this glorious one of the faithful in the day of her glory: “To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints” (Rev. 19:8). The responsibilities of the espoused Bride of Christ are clear. Is our chastity (individual and collective) being preserved?

“Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.” “These are the true sayings of God.”

E.B.W.

Companions



LN nothing is a young sister more exposed to danger than in the choice of companions. She will do well to be on her guard, and choose only those whose aims are the same as she herself has chosen. Let her avoid frivolous company, whether professedly in the truth or not. All are not Israel who are of Israel, neither are all wise who profess the truth. She should cultivate sobriety without being morose. Let her discourage levity and light talk as spiritually hurtful, and when possible avail herself of the society of soberminded brethren and sisters, with whom intercourse will be profitable and instructive, remembering the words of Solomon, “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise.”

Let her be specially mindful of the allegiance she owes to Christ in the choice of a companion for life. It is natural and right that her thoughts turn in this direction, and a truly holy relationship may come of it, but let her be sure to encourage no advances outside of the truth, nor be won over by promises to consider the truth when a union has been effected. The snares that encircle a union of this sort

(which would be a virtual allying of herself with the world) are more dreadful and numerous and intricate than a young girl dreams of. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" is an apostolic injunction, and uttered for our benefit, as the mind of Christ. Even in the truth, let her be careful that the brother with whom she would keep company in view of a life-long relationship, is thoroughly in love with the truth, and bent upon a faithful obedience to it, and let them together beware of the tendency of the young mind to overlook the obligations which the possession of the truth imposes, and to make the profession of it a mere garb or occasion for serving the flesh.

I have known cases in which the truth has been thus associated, with the result of the flesh triumphing to the suppression of the things of the Spirit. As she prizes the successful issue of her earthly career, let the young sister take all heed in the beginning of the journey, that in this matter she take no false step. She ought in this, as in all matters that affect her well-being, seek and earnestly desire guidance and direction from God. He has caused the promise to be placed on record: "In all thy ways acknowledge the Lord, and he will direct thy path." Let her confide her cause to Him, and go forward in trustful confidence.

Jane Roberts

You cannot resist the influence of a constant companion, whether the influence is good or bad, reasonable or otherwise. Therefore be careful in your selection. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise."

Whom To Marry



ARE you, in searching for a partner for life, looking for one whom God would approve — one who would serve a nobler part than the mere providing of a comfortable home, or animal pleasures? Then turn your eyes in the way of those only who love the Bible, and who show their love for it by a regular and faithful reading of its pages. This is the counsel of the oracles of God. What if this counsel is mocked by outsiders, and emphasised by far too few of those who name the name of Christ? Wisdom is wisdom and is indestructible, and happy are they who heed her voice. Marriage with the alien is a sin, and marriage with those who are unfaithful to Bible teaching is related to it. Satisfactory partners — wise and good people (judging wisdom and goodness by the divine standard) — are not to be found away from Bible influence, and this influence exists only where a constant and attentive place is given to Scripture study. In the matter of marriage, never be in a hurry. Avoid being led into an unwise arrangement by self-deception. A man or woman is not in the Truth (whatever his or her claims may be) who does not believe and obey it — who has no fondness for it, and fondness shows itself by a desire to read and talk about it. We are wise if we aim at securing partners more spiritually minded than ourselves, not less so. Marriage is a very serious matter — it means either help or hindrance in the fight for eternal life. God is concerned with the marriage of His children, for He is concerned with their salvation. Hear, therefore, His voice in the act of choosing. He has spoken plainly. Hesitate not to search and ponder His mind and your marriage will be no failure.

C.H.J.

A False Excuse For Disobedience



HERE is no one in the Ecclesia that I care for, it may be said, and perhaps said in truth. But this would not justify union with the alien. Disobedience (which alien marriages are) is not allowable under any circumstances. Let us be careful lest we invent excuses for the purpose of evading plain and stringent commands. The one who talks as above would see that his ideal of a partner is a scripture approved one; and, next, he should not forget to make his desire a matter of prayer. God gives husbands and wives, in answer to prayer, as well as daily bread. If God withhold a partner for a time it is for our good. Therefore let the one who has to wait be patient and trustful.

C.H.J.

Marriage is Honourable



T is a great mistake to think that Paul discountenanced marriage because upon one occasion, by reason of certain distress, he gave exceptional advice (1 Cor. 7:26). To the Hebrews (Ch. 13:4) he wrote of marriage being honourable in all, and the word he used has been rendered *had in reputation* (Acts 5:34); *dear* (Acts 20:24); *precious* (1 Cor. 3:12); *most precious* (Rev. 21:11); and similarly in fourteen texts. Besides, Paul expressly commanded "the young women to marry" (1 Tim. 5:14). Who were they to marry? Surely not old brethren — or the medically unfit — or the alien young men! No: marriage is honourable in all. Brother Roberts was right in concluding as he did: "I always felt that marriage was something that lay in my path before I could enter upon the earnest work of life. And, now I see how serviceable it has been in every way for the work that has been done." How many of us who have been Christadelphians practically all our lives can say Amen to those conclusions?

F.G.J.

“Heirs Together Of The Grace of Life”



THE words of Peter aptly set the stage for our exhortation. He succinctly outlines the duties that wives bear to their husbands, whilst at the same time enjoining upon husbands their deep obligation to dwell peaceably with their partners, granting the honour due to them because they are “heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered” (1 Pet. 3:7). The Greek word here translated *hinder*, signifies to impede the easy path of a person by breaking up the road, or by placing obstacles upon it. Hence, metaphorically, it depicts the distracting effect that lack of understanding and harmony between a man and his wife can have on their worship, and particularly their prayers.

Marriage is the combining of two individuals into a single unit, and because of this unity, it is difficult to over-state the influence that husband and wife wield over one another. The Lord Jesus, in emphasising this singleness of purpose brought about by true marriage, declared: “For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh” (Matt. 19:5). A common outlook on life, and a kindred spirit in respect to spiritual values are absolutely essential to a sound and fruitful life together. “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” asked Amos (Ch. 3:3). The happiest marriages among those outside the Truth are those in which husband and wife enjoy a common interest and share their moments of enjoyment together. When two people have the same goal in life, and seek a common plateau of success, they will be mutually willing to work and sacrifice to achieve it. The failures and disappointments they will meet along the way will seem trivial when experienced together. For those of us in the family of God who are married, the need for marital agreement and singleness of purpose is even greater. Our entire life is built around the Truth. Remove it from our sphere of existence, and our whole purpose for living will

be shattered. For the Truth is far more than a mere catechism of fundamental facts; it is a way of life which involves us emotionally. Marriage is like the joining together of the tributaries of a stream which merge into a single river and unitedly flow with added power to the sea. With two such powerful and demanding influences in our lives, it is understandable why the attitude of either spouse so deeply affects the other.

In view of the fact that so often the marriage union tends to distract from the Truth, we can sympathise with Paul's desire that all men were even as he, himself. The apostle found it advantageous to remain single, as far as he personally was concerned. It would be good for anyone to remain so, providing such celibacy proved an aid to the Truth. Paul, however, recognised that the power to abstain was a gift from God, not given to every man. For the majority it would be far better to marry than to burn. But why did the apostle adopt such an attitude as this? Why did he feel that it would be better, if one could contain himself, to abide even as he? The answer, of course, is to be found in the measure of service one is capable of rendering to the Truth. So often one member of a marriage union exercises a bad influence on the other. In the natural course of married life, Paul declares: "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise the husband hath not power of his body, but the wife" (1 Cor. 7:4). Such responsibilities demand the utmost in caution and restraint in both husband and wife. The demands which one makes of his spouse should never be allowed to interfere with the claims of the Truth. Because of the constant division of service that marriage involves, Paul encouraged men and women to serve the Lord "with carefulness." He urged all to enter the service of Truth unencumbered with anxieties for he knew well the frustrations that can arise from divided interests. "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but he that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife" (1 Cor. 7:32-33). Paul, speaking under the guidance of the Spirit, knew whereof he spoke. There are always certain distractions present in a marriage union that can greatly hamper our service to God, if we allow them to do so. The Scriptures abound with examples of the tremendous influence one member of a couple can wield

over the other for good or ill. It was Eve who fell to the subtilty of the serpent, and after experiencing the change from that of "very good" to that of evil, induced her husband to likewise transgress. Jezebel's corrupt influence on her husband, Ahab, is legendary. This king of Israel added to all his sins by taking the wicked Jezebel to wife, and following her immoral worship of Baal. The depravity and immorality to which Jezebel drove Ahab is unsurpassed in sacred history: "Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him" (1 Kings 16:33). In the New Testament, the experience of Ananias and Sapphira stands out as an example of the manner in which two professing Christians evilly affected each other. It was not only Ananias who kept back part of the price, but Sapphira was also "privy to it." They had "conceived this thing" in their hearts, and had "agreed together" to tempt the Spirit of the Lord." We are left to wonder what would have happened in these examples had either of the partners insisted on adherence to the law of God. Perhaps he or she would have caused, by chaste behaviour, the conversion of the other. Fortunately the examples are not all bad. The intervention of Abigail prevented the hasty revenge of King David on the wicked Nabal. In the New Testament, the very lovely story of Aquila and Priscilla is found throughout the ministry of Paul. Their mutual zeal for the Lord convinced Paul that he should take them with him as he left Corinth and departed to Ephesus. When the apostle left them in Ephesus, he did so with the confidence that they would work together to further the spread of the Truth. In his epistle to the Romans, he greets them as "my helpers in Christ Jesus" and makes mention of "the ecclesia that is in their house" (16:3,5).

Marriage was originally designed to help the husband. That is the significance of the statement found in Genesis 2:18: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." The Hebrew root for both *help* and *meet* is the same, and, according to Gesenius, has the primary meaning of "girding, surrounding, hence defending." It is used of an aid in warfare such as an ally. It is clear that God's purpose for supplying Adam with a wife was not merely for the propagation of mankind, but, more important, as a companion who would be able and willing

to render spiritual aid to her husband, and to foster his flagging hopes when the need arose. The responsibility of the husband to the wife is not less urgent. As spiritual leader in the house, his attitude toward the whole sphere of Christ living will have a deep affect on the service his spouse is capable of giving. Both partners in a marriage relationship, therefore, must exercise care and vigilance lest he or she prove a hindrance rather than an aid. Let us all beware, lest we discourage our partners by being lethargic or hesitant in our obedience to the Truth. Many well-meaning brethren and sisters stay at home, or engage in some activity other than the Truth, on those nights when a Bible Class is being conducted, merely because either the husband or the wife has evidenced disinterest in attending. It is a sad reflection to realise that the lethargy or lack of spiritual response in one's mate is sufficient to extinguish the spark of responsibility in oneself. How brightly and vigorously should the flame of Truth burn within those who are misdirected so easily! It takes a strong, deeply spiritual individual to fulfil his duties to God and the ecclesia in spite of his or her mate's languor. Strong, because often actions take on the appearance of lack of endearment and consideration of his marital partner when he sees clearly his duty to God and does it! Once the habit of yielding to the weaker partner's wishes is established, it is exceedingly difficult to stop. Marriage soon becomes a contest between one's obligation to the Truth and the vacillating fancies of a spiritually decadent spouse. Compromise, under these conditions, becomes disastrous, for it leads to that state of lukewarmness which is abhorrent to Christ (Rev. 3:14-16).

Marriage is the full realisation of love in the highest sense of the word. It is the unreserved giving of one's self to another. It is, therefore, much more than mere physical association. True, genuine love will manifest itself in a deep concern for the other's welfare. It will be revealed, not merely in verbal expressions, but also by a sincere anxiety for the other's spiritual and moral growth. The real test of the sincerity of one's love, both for one's spouse and for the Truth, is in meeting one's responsibilities to God, and doing everything in one's power to encourage the same willingness in his partner. If our love is to be without dissimulation, then we must be certain that we see clearly

those spiritual values which demand our first consideration. If both partners truly love the Truth, as well as each other, how pleasant will be their journey towards the Kingdom of God if both are willing to share in the work of the Truth, walking hand in hand in its service, how prosperous will their efforts be in the Lord's vineyard! Their lives together will truly reflect that lovely relationship that exists between Christ and his Ecclesia. Further, what a crowning exaltation when, on the day of accounting, both husband and wife are told: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

R.S.

Complete mutual love and sympathy existed between Adam and Eve, for they were not only "one flesh" by marriage, but also by creation, for Eve was formed out of Adam by the action of a common parent. They would thus both inherit common aspirations and ideals. No other marriage has been quite like that one. The exact counterpart is found in the marriage of the Lamb and his Bride for in their case also, the one has been formed out of the other by the action of a common spiritual Parent.

Mutual Understanding



Sister may find much more to contend with than she had expected on entering the married state. She may have pictured to herself the delightful times she would have when united to one in the truth, who would be to her a continued help and instructor.

Perhaps she expected too much from him, and forgot that she would also have to do her part, as having at last to give an account of herself. Perhaps she had pictured to herself the delightful evenings they would spend together when her husband could read aloud to her, as she busied herself with her needle, and how the heavenly dews of spiritual refreshing would continually descend, as the result of her husband's ministrations in things divine.

Her actual experience in married life will greatly disappoint her. She overlooked the fact that her husband also would be in need of ministration; that his arduous struggle with an evil world outside would unfit him in some degree for positive attention, and lead him to look to home as a haven of rest, when each days toil was ended. Must not his disappointment be great if he finds his partner more an additional weight than a relief, and not by any means the fellow helper he had fondly anticipated? If there is not great care to exercise forbearance here, a rupture of the happy experience of first-wedded days will take place. It will above all things be necessary first, that both husband and wife be thoroughly in love with the truth, having the fear and hope and love of God richly dwelling in each, independently, inducing in each a willingness to submit to whatever the truth requires at their hands.

Jane Roberts

Overcoming Evil With Good: Emulating Abigail



IT sometimes happens that the husband is overbearing, and forgets the conditions which engender a loving and ready service on the part of his wife. He neglects the working out of his pattern, and takes to admonishing his wife about some flaw in her attitude, instead of acting the part that would remove the flaw. Paul nowhere enjoins upon the husband to assert his headship over his wife; but exhorts him to meet his wife's loving and spontaneous subjection by following the example of Christ, with the great love with which he loved the ecclesia. However, to follow this, would lead me out of my province. I must leave him to think it up for himself, hoping he may, as the result, approve the more excellent way. I direct my thoughts and counsel to the sister-wife who finds herself mated with such a one.

Her task will be a difficult one, but let her not quail before it. Let her by all means endeavour to fulfil in a becoming manner the duties and responsibilities of her position. Let the dignity and patience of her meek and quiet spirit, be the means of heaping coals of fire upon the head of her faulty companion, if such she have. Let her remember that a "soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." If she has a Nabal to deal with, she can at least, like Abigail of old, shew herself to be a woman of good understanding; and her wisdom may, like her, avert much evil that would otherwise come upon her household.

Jane Roberts

Advice For Those Unequally Yoked



HERE are, doubtless, many drawbacks to a sister who finds herself in this position. She is thereby deprived of much encouragement and help, and experiences many obstacles which would not exist with her husband's hearty co-operation in, and identification with the truth. Still, even this form of evil may not exist without advantage to the sister so circumstanced, though such advantage will, doubtless, rank among the "forced benefits" of her experience. One of them will be that she will be thrown upon her own resources for spiritual sustenance, and her profiting will appear in her individual intelligence and spontaneity in the truth. At the same time, there is much danger. Her connection with an unbelieving husband may exclude the atmosphere of the truth, and surround her with adverse influences which she may be unable to resist. She may, if not on her guard, be insensibly and gradually robbed of her enthusiasm for the truth, and having a name to live, may become dead. The simple principle of placing "Christ first," her Lord, in all her course through life, would prove a guiding star out of many a dangerous path into which she might otherwise be led. Better brace the disfavour of husband and friends than imperil a favourable reception from the King of kings, when he comes forth to judge his household.

Of course, she will require to use discretion in such a matter, and not unnecessarily cause trouble; still, if she cannot comply with the commands of Christ without giving offence to her husband, she has no alternative. But let her see to it that it is really the offence of the truth, and not the flesh in some form taking advantage of the liberty wherewith the truth has made us free. If she have brought herself into his condition of unequal yoking subsequent to her acceptance of the truth, she will have ample reason to repent her folly and her sin, and will, probably, find sufficient retribution in the increased difficulties which she will find around her, in the good fight of faith. If she have arrived at a knowledge of the truth after her union with an unbeliever, she can at least rejoice that she has done so, and will make the best of her surroundings, hoping by her

faithful endeavours to bring about a better and more harmonious state of things.

Jane Roberts

Married In The Lord



Those who know by happy experience the blessedness of union and fellowship in the truth, nothing need be said. Their joint labours will show the sweet advantage of being of one accord, and of one mind: fellow helpers into the Kingdom of God, and heirs together of the grace of life; growing up into Christ who is the head, being rooted and grounded in the love of him. To such the truth is a never-failing source of interest. It furnishes them with occupation for all their spare time, and more. and so great is the variety of ways in which it will claim their attention, help and sympathy, that, whether occupying the highest or the lowest or the middle place in society, they will find enough to fill their hands, and will certainly have no time for the genteel frivolities with which it is customary in "society" to fill up the time. Their private studies can hardly be placed on the list of labour. These are to them as resting places where they drink and are refreshed, and strengthened to resume the journey, in which they are firmly united as fellow pilgrims, toiling together with strong purpose for a common end.

But this happy experience does not fall to the lot of all who profess the Truth. There are cases in which husband and wife, both professedly in the Truth, do not run smoothly together. There are many reasons for this unfortunate state of things, some of which cannot entirely be done away with, though most of them may be modified. The great bulk of the brethren and sisters belong to the class who have to toil most of the time in secular matters — each in their own department, and each having to endure much fatigue and weariness, which unfits for that cordial manifestation of

appreciation which under more easy circumstances would flow from each to the other, rendering daily intercourse a source of mutual happiness and comfort. Still, the fact that some hard working couples get along without strife or jarring, shows that fatigue alone does not constitute a barrier to conjugal felicity in the Truth. The probability is that shortcomings on both sides are the direct or indirect cause of the difficulty; or it may be that a high sense of the obligations of the Truth on one side is not reciprocated on the other. Now as a life of continual jarring, whatever the cause, must be prejudicial to progress of the truth, it would be well for the sister who finds herself thus placed, to try to discover if she possibly can, how she may by any modification of her own behaviour, bring about a happier and more becoming state of things. It would be better for her to forego even what she might legitimately claim as her right, if the truth were thereby served, than stand out for it at the cost of a perpetual unpleasantness, which interferes with the work of the Spirit. She will always have the consolation that whatever he loses by the service of the Truth now (if incurred willingly) will be repaid her an hundredfold when the Lord returns. This is taking for granted that she is a true sister — one of Sarah's daughters, willing in all things to be subject to the will of her Lord. Indeed unless she be this, there is no chance for her at all in the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit. "Christ first" means self last, or rather, self crucified, and therefore, in a suffering and humble condition. The consecration of self to Christ and his truth, needs daily renewing amid the daily occupations in which we engage, and only in this daily renewal of service and sacrifice, may the true sister hope to attain that spirit of ready obedience in all things to the will of Christ, which will enable her to endure patiently, and avoid the rock upon which others split and flounder who do not endure, but who murmur and dispute about what they ought to endure, as seeking Him who is invisible. If the love of Christ were paramount in each, the troubles that disturb in this manner could not arise. This love of Christ needs continual strengthening by intercourse with him in the Word and in prayer. Yesterday's supply will not entirely suffice for today. And in this matter we should be careful not to deceive ourselves. A sister may imagine that she loves Christ supremely; but let her test herself by what she is willing to endure for his sake. She

may find that she has overrated her affection; that many things dispute the pre-eminence with her in her mind and affections. She will find it a work of time to gain the mastery over her own natural desires, and to readily and willingly give the first and best consideration to him who alone is worthy of it. Yet let her not lose heart because she finds herself defective. She will, in the end, overcome and conquer, if her faith fail not; and never forget that "faith cometh by hearing," and hearing by "the Word of God." She has special need to fortify herself.

Jane Roberts

The Bride of Christ



ANY beautiful figures are employed in the scriptures to describe the close and affectionate relationship between Christ and his people, but there is none more beautiful than that of marriage. What is marriage? For an answer we must turn, not to the many unhappy alliances which obtain on all hands but to God's ideal of the institution. God made "male and female" that they twain should be "one flesh." Where this oneness this divinely intended unity exists, men nourish and cherish their wives, they love them as their own bodies. Thus it is says Paul, with Christ and the ecclesia He allowed himself to be cruelly slaughtered for her sake, he now yearns for her well-being as the Scriptures teach. As we think upon the revealed mystery we feel that we miserably fail in our appreciation of Christ's love, of his deep down fondness for us and of the joy which little acts done in his name and for his sake must yield to him. But he doubtless bears with us. He knows well the deadening influences of sin which press so heavily upon all of us. Our deficiencies are not to last for ever. O Lord "Increase our faith" and forgive our shortcomings. Exaltation to spirit nature will right matters. The Kingdom of God will see a perfect multitudinous woman as we now behold in Christ a perfect man. Then will come the time for a complete antitype of human marriage only in the antitype the excellences will exceed the type as the light of the sun exceeds that of the moon.

A.T.J.

Chapter Five

Keepers
at
Home

A serene home is one that is united in elevating Yahweh, and in which, among the members of the household there prevails a mutual warmth begotten of love and an understanding of one another's needs. In such a home there will exist a sense of well-being and an appreciation of spiritual and material blessings received, as well as a quiet corner for study. But no man can make his wife provide all of this: it is a mutual undertaking. She must co-operate with him by anticipating the needs several steps in advance. In Solomon's picture, the balance of the home rested in the hands of the "virtuous woman."

At Home As A Wife



Sister-wife should acquire the power of self-sustenance in the truth. Not in order that she may shake herself free from her husband's influence and set up on her own behalf, but in order that she may fully come to realize in the privations incident to her position, that help, encouragement and happiness, which the conjugal relation was designed to yield, but which it may fail at all times to give.

To attain the necessary degree of self-sustenance, we must remember that the highest object of life is to please Him who has called us to be saints: perfecting holiness in ourselves through the fear and love and obedience of Him. The sister married in the Lord, has her part to perform, and frequently an arduous and onerous one. She requires to be strengthened inwardly to sustain her in the discharge of it.

If she depends too much upon her husband, she runs the risk of disappointment; and whatever disappoints, is a hindrance and source of weakness, and must be avoided, if at all possible. She loves her husband, and desires his company. He loves his wife, and desires her welfare in all things. It would be his choice to spend his leisure time with her; but, the claims of duty he cannot disregard: and these frequently call him from her side. The necessity of growing in the truth also requires him to withdraw himself sometimes for study. Now, let not the sister who has to forego ordinary home pleasure for the truth's sake, imagine that she is in a special degree aggrieved. The experience of the sisterhood generally in this respect, will be in many instances similar to her own. The problem to be solved is, how so to deport herself in the evil inevitably attendant upon this state of trial, as to secure the blessing of the age to come.

She may in many ways be called upon to forego much that she might legitimately claim as her right and privilege. Her husband's faithfulness to the truth, may decide him on courses that will deprive himself in many respects, and in this he expects, and is entitled to realise, that his wife as a daughter of the same Father will be able to join him. It will be well for her, and for her husband, if this is the case. It may bring deprivations and bitterness in some directions,

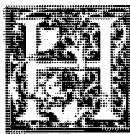
but let her remember for whose sake she is called upon thus to suffer, not forgetting his promise and abundant reward in the future, if the cross is willingly borne now.

Even if she thinks her husband extreme in his actions, and finds sometimes that his readiness to serve, and liberality in the truth, deprives her of the opportunities she might wish of showing spontaneity in the same direction, let her be comforted with the thought that in his labours and service and sacrifice for the truth, she is a sharer and co-labourer if she readily and uncomplainingly bear the share of disadvantage such service may bring to her, and that in the end she will share the reward of faithful stewardship which her husband seeks to earn by his devotion now.

It is very necessary that a sister-wife should cultivate the powers of self-sustenance in the truth. When she has attained this, she will find herself in the possession of a powerful protection against the disappointments incident to a husband's absence from home, or his occupation when at home to her apparent neglect. It will enable her to bear up with cheerful countenance and hopeful heart, when her immediate surroundings are not such as might inspire that frame of mind. It will be a great help to herself and an aid to her husband and often supply the first links in the chain that will lead to profitable and happy re-union at the end of a day's toil on both sides.

Jane Roberts

Love Your Husbands



HOW can a woman fulfil the Scriptural exhortation to love her husband? True love will always find a very practical way of expressing itself. It always cares for the object of its affections, and a wife, if she loves her husband, will care for him. She will care for his everyday wants and she will care for his spiritual requirements. By her judicious management of the home or the

reverse she can fortify him to work for her and for his God, or she can make his lot well-nigh unbearable. A selfish wife is a curse. Let us not be selfish. Let us sometimes place ourselves, in imagination, in our husband's place. We know what we would like. We would like to come home to a clean bright hearth and a clean bright face and to be greeted with fair bright words. Small things cannot be performed without pains and attention, and the wife who succeeds in them can rejoice in a happy well-managed household, whereas the wife who neglects them will have an unhappy muddled household. Therefore if we are tempted to meet our husbands with a cross face or a scolding tongue or an untidy appearance, let us ask ourselves should I like this if I were in his place?

If we are judicious and kind we shall find him ready to sympathise and help us bear our woes. If we are not judicious we may estrange him from us. For, after all, he is only human. There is one rock ahead which a young wife should avoid. Let her never make a third person a confidant instead of her husband. Should this advice be neglected any breach that may occur will grow wider and wider instead of closing. It is not wise to speak of a husband's shortcomings to others. That also will tend to widen any breach should it occur.

To turn to the more spiritual side of the subject. Love will cause a wife to care for her husband's spiritual needs. Love would never say, "I enjoy your companionship so much that I cannot spare you from my side to attend the meetings." Where both husband and wife cannot attend the meetings, true love would rather say, let us take turns, for if both stay home how shall we grow in the truth and be strengthened to resist the flesh! Love will prevent a wife absorbing her husband's time so that he cannot study the word and serve the truth in other ways. Love will make her frugal and self-denying that her husband's hands may be stretched forth to the needy and other services of the truth.

C.H.J.

Unbelieving Husbands



OME sister may say, "My husband is out of the truth and our home is wretched beyond my power to alter it." Well, dear sister, first make quite sure that it is beyond your power to alter matters. Be quite sure you are showing a true practical love for your husband. Remember that the truth does not consist solely in reading the Bible and preaching. There are daily duties to be performed and these, when faithfully carried out, appeal quite as strongly as an exhortation. Peter enjoins those who have unbelieving husbands to strive to win them by their upright godly behaviour. A living exhortation carries more weight than an oral one. If your faithful walk has no influence upon your husband be patient and leave your case in the hands of God. But do not depart from an attitude of love, submission and obedience. God will not forget that you have performed your duty to an unbelieving husband for His sake and He will count the service as rendered unto Him.

C.H.Jannaway

Recognising Your Part



HERE are things you can do and things you cannot do. God expects you to do the one and He will do the other. "Fellow-workers with God" is the beautiful rule of his administration. You cannot make flax and corn; but you can get ready the spindle and mill. Recognise your part and do it.

Robert Roberts

To her husband in the Truth, a sister has special obligations. She is a loving wife, and a loyal companion of his studies. With him she shares the same aspirations, the same tastes, the same ardour for the Truth of God. She strives to ease his difficulties, and make the home his sanctuary from the stress and battle of life. She sympathises as the closest of friends cannot sympathise. She understands as no other friend can understand. She appreciates as it is not in the power of any but Christ to appreciate. She is a help and a support and a stay in life's troubles as no other being on earth could be, however cordial their friendship and intimate their acquaintance." Of such a wife it can truly be said, "The heart of her husband will safely trust in her" (Prov. 31:11).

In The Home



IS it realistic for brethren or sisters to insist that a woman's place is in the home? Many sisters must have very mixed feelings when they read such passages as Titus 2:4,5 and 1 Cor. 14:35. "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

"And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the ecclesia."

Perhaps we think that if Paul were alive today he should modify these statements to suit our time. We sisters might reason that in these days, when women are frequently as well or even better educated than the brethren, and when women can hold down just as good a

job or profession as a man, the situation has completely changed.

Serious thought is needed on this subject, because a vital principle is involved. The Creator knows the need of his creatures in every detail, both spiritually and physically. He created man to be the dominant sex for a very good reason. A marriage is never really successful and rewarding unless the husband is the head of the woman. This may mean that a woman who has a strong personality will have to make a conscious effort to subdue her natural tendencies to "be the boss" and encourage her husband to take the lead, otherwise slowly but surely the marriage will become merely a legal tie, without the tender love and companionship of a true marriage in Christ. How often one can detect the underlying disharmony in a marriage that is dominated by the wife, even if on the surface all seems well! As followers of Christ, how much more vital it is for us to try to ensure that our marriages are as near as possible to the ideal of Christ and his bride! Marriage for us is for life, no until "divorce us do part."

Paul's words about women seem to produce extreme reactions. Either they are impatiently thrown off, with the statement that Paul is out of date; or, on the other hand, some women take them as a cue to become a dull and uninteresting cabbage, dutifully waiting at home for her husband, having little to contribute in the way of spiritual help to the family. Paul is not advocating that we should leave all the thinking and studying of the Bible to our husbands. Sisters have a duty to be lively and stimulating companions, eager to talk about spiritual things, and because of our own study able to contribute to the general family knowledge of God's word.

What a tremendous help a loving and understanding wife can be to her husband when he needs quiet to write an address, or criticism after he has given one. Only she will be able to give a really frank opinion, only she will dare to point out the little irritating mannerisms he may have when speaking, and often she will be the only one who gives the much needed words of encouragement when her husband feels that he has failed.

Often sisters express the view that the brethren do all the important work in the ecclesia, and that they feel unfulfilled and frustrated: "What is there for them to do for

God? During the first few formative years of a child's life, he is almost entirely in the company of his mother. These are the years when he is either becoming a spiritually minded Godly person or a self-centred child of the flesh, to whom the Word of God and its spiritual message will have no meaning.

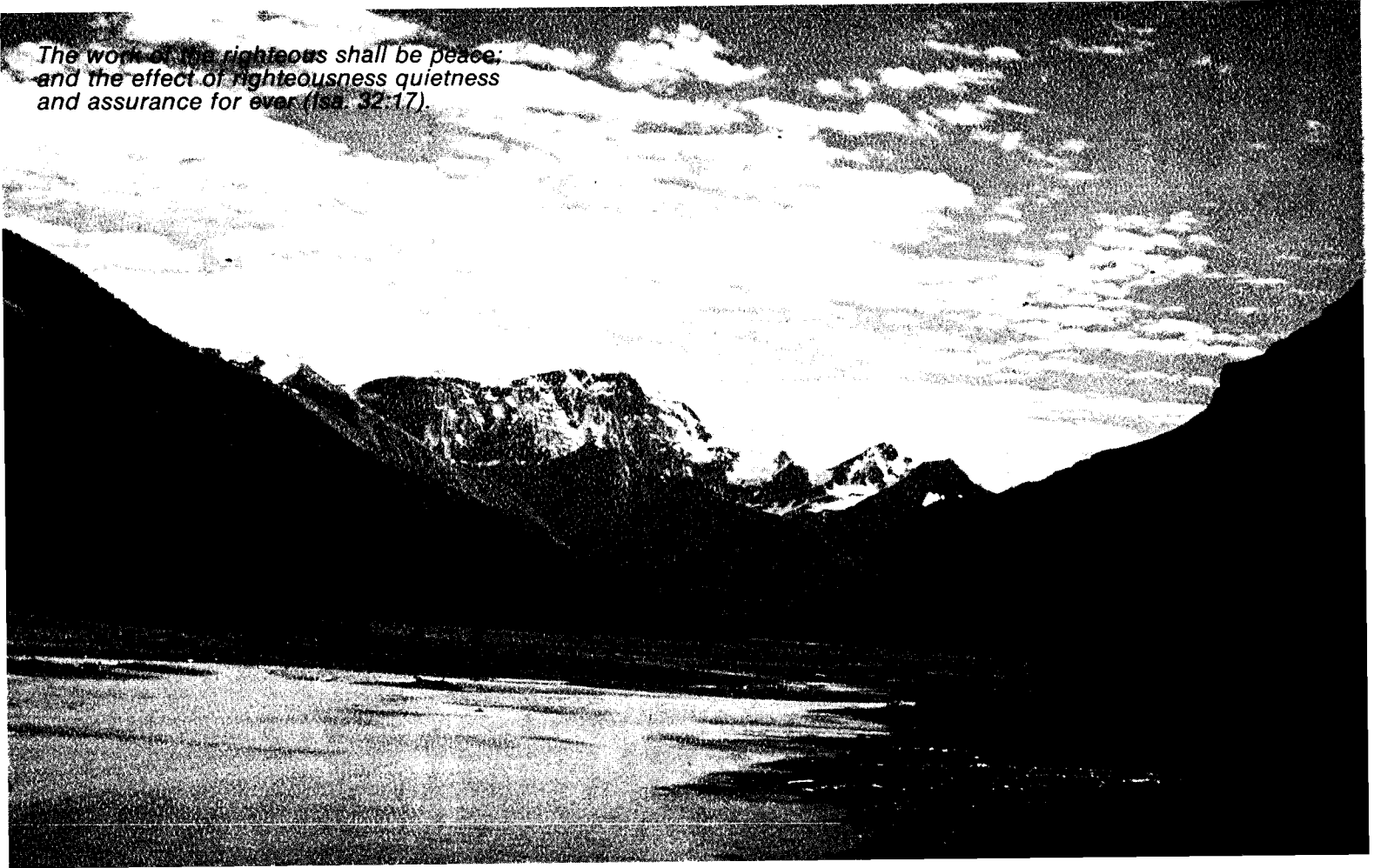
One fact on which modern psychology is agreed is that the very early years of life are of vital importance in the forming of character, and they can have a profound effect upon a person's mental health. With this in mind, a mother will realize what a great privilege and responsibility God has given her in having the care of children.

Many would agree that one of the greatest problems of our time is the fact that more and more children are being farmed out to strangers, while their mothers go out to work. It is very sad to see this happening even in our own community. Except in very unusual circumstances, surely there can be no excuse for a sister of Christ so blatantly to neglect her duty as to let someone else take on her responsibility. If it means going without a few luxuries in the home, how does that compare with the possible eternal life of the children?

Even to leave young children with one's own mother (whether she is a sister or not) for the purpose of going out to work, is unwise. Why deprive oneself of the joy of watching a baby grow and develop through all the fascinating stages of his early life just for the sake of more money? The years go by so quickly, and they cannot be relived. Never let us sisters take for granted the joy of motherhood, of which some are deprived. They, like Sarah, Hannah, Rachel and Elisabeth, would give their all to hold their own baby in their arms, and have the chance of bringing him up in the fear and love of the Lord. Let us try to model ourselves on Mary, who was chosen by God out of all Jewry to have the care of His beloved Son.

J.H.

*The work of the righteous shall be peace;
and the effect of righteousness quietness
and assurance for ever (isa. 32:17).*



A Mother's Guidance

*She bent the twig
Towards home,
Toward simple pleasures
And a firelight's glow;*

*She bent the twig
Toward Truth
And courage for the paths
Where Truth must go;*

*She bent the twig
Toward Love
To lift the hearts of those
Who only plod;
And when the tempest raged
Her tree stood firm —
For gently*

*She had bent the twig
Toward God.*



“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

Proverbs 22:6

Contentment



THE Scriptures exhort us not to grow discontented with our daily routine but to exalt our most common-place duties to the position of God-given tasks, and to show fidelity and diligence in their performance, which is to be "from the heart." The everyday things of life give more scope for developing character and bringing up the quality of obedience to Christ's commands than we are sometimes disposed to think. When we ponder the training of the worthiest of God's children we perceive that few, if any, were relieved of the common daily routine.

"I have learned," said Paul "in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." And his further comment for our instruction is: "Godliness with contentment is great gain." To learn and remember this will counteract our natural tendency to grumble and go about with sour looks at what we may be inclined to regard as weary drudgery and a hard lot, quite out of harmony with the position of a saint.

Let us remember that our divinely imposed obligations in our respective relationships, cannot be cancelled by distributing thousands of pamphlets, by holding hundreds of arguments with the stranger, or by reading whole books of the Bible at a sitting.

C.H.Jannaway

True happiness consists not in the possession of material wealth, but in acquiring a fulness of spiritual grace, which yields comfort to us, and a beneficial influence to all with whom we come in contact.

Benefits of Exercise



state of robust health is impossible if a sister is within doors the whole time. Consider that the life is in the blood, and that the blood depends upon the air for its purity and vigour. If sisters were aware of the advantage which results from a walk in the open air (and they ought with their enlightenment, to be aware of it), they surely would make greater efforts in this direction. Let them try the experiment of a run out every day. Even a quarter of an hour every day will do them more good than a whole month once a year by the seaside, if all the rest of the time is spent in the house.

Domestic purchases will always give abundant occasion for daily walks; and if these are out of her way, let her make a visit where she may be of service — say to an invalid (just for a few minutes) — her walk will do her a double benefit. She will bring back with her the pleasant reflection that someone besides herself has benefited by her outing; and the healthful stimulus of both will be felt afterwards.

Where no such errand presents itself, and she has nothing specially calling her out, don't let her yield to the temptation of staying in the house. Let her take her walk by any means; it will give her the opportunity of inhaling the invigorating air outside, and if she be within reach of green fields and shady lanes, let her enjoy the sweet season of contact with the soothing quietude so conducive to meditation. She will return greatly renewed in her purpose, and increased in her ability to pursue the steady way of life, in preference to the empty pursuits of the world around her. She will, in this matter of going out, have to be very determined; for she will frequently have to encounter obstacles, in disinclination, and in the many claims of household matters requiring her attention; and if she give in, she will soon find herself in the weary valley again.

Let her determine, as in the case of reading, at all hazards, to secure this great boon. How much better is she able to meet the demands of her family cares after she has had a run out for a short time, when after a day's stewing in the house over some troublesome piece of work, upon

which she has exhausted nearly all her patience. And how much better able she is to greet her husband cheerfully at the close of her day's work, if she has thus healthfully varied her occupation during the day.

Let her try to experiment, and she will find growing upon her the power to minister to and to bless others. Even if her husband be faulty, and remiss in his profession of the truth and practice thereof, she will by this power of self-sustenance, be able to maintain her own position in the truth; and by her exemplary behaviour, may assist her husband into a more excellent way. It will also be of very great service to her in the training of her children. If she first be able to rule herself, she will be the more able wisely to rule those under her.

Sis. J. Roberts

A Fine House And Wasted Time



LET us choose to deny ourselves the questionable pleasure of surrounding ourselves with household ornaments, which consume such an amount of precious time in the taking care of them. We can spend the time to better purpose. We need not seek to please our neighbours in the keeping of our houses. Our standard differs from theirs. A sister's calling requires her to regard her house as a convenience in this wilderness state, and not as a thing she is to live for. It is not with her a principal object of attention. She will be careful to keep a clean house and a comfortable house, but a stylish house she has neither time nor taste for. What God requires of her will demand the time, and the skill, and the means, which a fine house would consume of her hands. The will of Christ has the first place in her affection. She looks at some women who profess to be Christ's, and yet have no time for anything

beyond the demands of the house; things of God find no place with them. Bright furniture and spotless carpets seem more to them than Christ fellowshiped in deeds of kindness to comfortless hearts, and the gospel preached to the perishing. The true daughters of Sarah reverse all this, and dispense with much that is considered indispensable in worldly households, because they find that to give such things the attention considered genteel, they must neglect the claims of higher things. Their principle is pre-eminence to the things that belong to God. This indeed, is the only safe rule to follow. It may separate us oftentimes from the "respectable" people so called, but it will place us in the company of apostles and prophets, who were at a discount in their day, because they esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. And we have the joy of knowing that if it gives us their company in the present bitterness, it will ensure for us their glorious society in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God. If we have now the answer of a good conscience, we may indulge in the glorious hope of sharing the honour which awaits all who have in like manner laboured and not fainted. Where then will be the plans and patience bestowed upon the frivolities of fashionable life?

Sis. J. Roberts

Let Christadelphian sisters open their eyes to the ungodly trend of these days, and let them take care that they are not swept along by the beguiling and insidious influence of the world around them.

Out Of This Life

*Out of this life I shall never take
The things of silver and gold I make;
All that I cherish and hoard away
After I die, for others will stay.*

*Though I call it mine, and boast its worth,
I must then give it up for mother earth;
All that I gather and all that I keep,
I must leave behind when I fall asleep.*

*I wonder often just what I shall own,
When I pass before the Judgment Throne;
What shall I find and what shall he see
In the life and character that makes up me.*

*Shall the Great Judge learn when I am thru
That my life has gathered the riches true?
Or shall at last be mine to find
That all I had worked for I left behind?*



In The Household



THAT the sister-wife should be able to sustain her part is highly necessary. Her position in the household is an all-important and influential one. Her influence for good or evil is great. If she will but rise to the dignity of her calling in the truth, and to the honour, responsibility and power attaching to it; as the help-meet of one of like precious faith, to whom she may prove a true helper unto the kingdom of God, and as being herself a candidate for eternal life; her labour will be ennobled in her own estimation, and she will be greatly encouraged in the works of overcoming the evil in herself and around her. Should she be tempted to think her position too obscure, and her sphere of action too limited to be of any account; let her remember, that it is only in proportion to the means at our disposal that we shall have to render account. It was the servant with only one talent who failed through not using it. Let us take warning, and make the best of even small opportunities, lest by any means we should fail of the grace of God.

"Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the ecclesias of the Gentiles."

Romans 16:3-4



Chapter Six

*Children
are an
Heritage of
Yahweh*

The idealism of youth calls for an ideal irreproachable way of life in adult brethren and sisters. Deeds, not words only, count in the example which we should present to youth, and indeed to the world. In addition we should be aglow with conviction and enthusiasm, and this should always be evident. Our guidance, our advice and our leadership of the young will be respected and accepted when our lives are patterned on the gentle, understanding, and wise sympathy of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose life was light, and whose light is life eternal.

Parental Example



HE inspired writer of the Proverbs, speaking of a faithful parent who would encourage his son in ways of righteousness, represents him as saying: "Let thine eyes observe my ways" (Prov. 23:26). It is an appeal of tremendous responsibility to the parent. It invites the child to look closely at parental ways to see therein an example of righteousness.

The general parent-child relationship emphasised by the Proverbs, should be closely considered by all Christadelphian parents in these times when parental control is either negligible or lacks the power of sound example. Example can play a major part in educating children in spiritual matters. Let us face facts. How can we expect our children to be loyal to the things of the Truth, if we are half-hearted or hypocritical towards them? What example is it, if we solemnly intone that we are to be separate from the world, and take the family to a theatre, or a drive in? What appeal is it, if a parent speaks impressively about the need for studying the Bible, and then leads the family in several hours of television viewing most evenings? What value is a father's exhortation for the need of dedication in service to Yahweh, if he, at the same time, gives the best of his life to the development of his business affairs? Parents need always to remember that children have remarkable powers of observation and imitation, so that their inconsistencies do not pass unnoticed. How blessed our children would be if we all, in honesty, could echo the words of the wise man: "Let thine eyes observe my ways!" Parents cannot reasonably expect their children to respond to the teaching of the Truth if they are not themselves giving a sound lead in that direction.

The responsibilities of parenthood were impressed by the Law of Yahweh:

"I Yahweh thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me" (Exod. 20:5). Yahweh is here referring to those children who follow the example of their parents in hating Him to the extent that they fail to give Him their first love. The point is thus

stressed that children follow the lead of their parents. Hatred of Yahweh, manifested by a neglect of His word and commandments, can become a family characteristic if parents give a lead in that direction, to the end that divine retribution will come upon those descendants that follow the example given.

How tremendous are the responsibilities of parenthood! However, the voice of Inspiration also observes that "a good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children. . . ." (Prov. 13:22). What greater inheritance can we give our children than a sound knowledge of God's ways? If a child is thoroughly initiated therein, and a deep love for Yahweh is carefully inculcated (Prov. 22:6), the "Godly seed" will be preserved. In this, the power of example is paramount. Children must be given the opportunity to observe that their parents:

- Remain separate from the world;
- Educate themselves and the family in divine truth;
- Dedicate their lives to serving Yahweh.

Separation, education and dedication comprise three key words for healthy family life in the Truth. A home built on these principles will manifest unity, happiness and wellbeing. There will be greater communion between the Father in heaven, and the family on earth, ensuring that His care and blessing will be extended towards it, to the ultimate eternal benefit of each member.

The entire family will learn to develop faith in Yahweh that will ease the trials and difficulties of life. Each member will develop a confidence in the Creator that will have a unifying effect upon the whole family.

On the other hand, to allow a child to taste of the world without restraint is equivalent to permitting him to drink a deadly poison. Equally disastrous is to permit children to do as they like. True, the theory of self-expression is widely acclaimed and accepted these days, but so is the incidence of juvenile delinquency: and one stems from the other. Loving but firm discipline is essential if children are to be wisely guided. Again, the book of Proverbs instructs:

"Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beat him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell" (*sheol*, the grave).

The teaching is clear. Paul expressed it this way: "No

chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:11).

These two quotations clearly show how that the natural typifies the spiritual. Wise and loving parents will not stand by and permit their children to commit transgressions against divine principles without correcting them. To do otherwise would be to confirm the child in its selfwill. Paul taught:

"We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and *live*?" (v. 9). Live? Yes indeed! Or, as the Proverb has it: "deliver his soul from the grave!" Discipline is essential, if we are to be delivered out of death: and the same principle is equally important as far as our children are concerned.

Unfortunately, many parents are far too dilatory in these matters. Paul poses the question: "What son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" To ask is to answer. The only father who would not bother to discipline his child would be one who would be indifferent to his future wellbeing; and such a son would become completely spoiled and selfwilled in his ways.

The Ecclesia at Ephesus had become subjected to strong pressure from an evil environment, against which it was struggling for survival. Clearly the effects were felt in individual family units as well as ecclesially. There is a need to strengthen the ties of family life, and to that end the fifth and portion of the sixth chapters were written.

Having dealt with husband and wife relationship, Paul turned his attention to the children: "Children! Obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Ch. 6:1-3).

The word children is *teknon*, which is akin to *tikto* signifying to beget, to bear an off-spring. The term does not relate to small children merely, but to those of any age up to the time when they leave home to marry, and begin a home of their own. Loyalty of children towards parents should not be lessened with their growth towards maturity. They should be prepared to obey — a word which signifies

to listen, attend, hear, give close attention in order to answer. This latter meaning is intensely interesting when applied to young folk; how difficult it is to get them to remain quiet long enough to hear what their parents are telling them!

In this instruction, however, the natural again types the spiritual; for as parents require children to hearken unto them, so they should give their attention to the Father in the heaven. Notice the constant use of the word obey:

"He (Christ) became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him . . ." "By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed. . . ." "Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you" (Heb. 5:9; 11:8; Rom. 6:17).

Paul urged that children should obey their parents. Not just one parent, notice, but both of them! The unity of the parents is implied, and is stressed in Ephesians 5. But this single word alone is not the complete instruction, for the Apostle added "your parents in the Lord." Such children are, potentially, the continuation of "the holy seed," and therefore have an obligation to their parents above those not in Christ. How sublime that our children learn the principle of obedience to the Father, through filial compliance to the will of their parents. They thus are taught that in such subjection there is a primary responsibility to the Lord. Further; our children should see that this responsibility makes them different, separate from other children. They are called to become part of the "holy seed," and must learn to rise to their responsibilities.

This is emphasised by Paul's concluding comment: "for this is right" the word "right" is *dikaïos*, a word used elsewhere of the Father's own character (2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 16:5). Those "offspring" who learn to abide by these apostolic instructions will be well-pleasing to our heavenly Father, and will exhibit characteristics in which He delights. How wonderful for children to know that they can act in a way that is wellpleasing to Yahweh! Should they not be lovingly encouraged to manifest such ways?

They are also required to honour father and mother. Honour follows obedience. Children must learn that it is pointless for them to claim to honour their parents, if they do not obey them. A beautiful point is set forth in Paul's use

of this quotation from Exod. 20:12, namely, that there is promise of reward to those who keep God's commandments! This should never be overlooked in the spiritual education of children. We believe that the glory and reality of the coming Kingdom should ever be set before them. Let them learn to rejoice, with us, in the hope of Israel: to see the Lord Jesus enthroned in glory; to watch the great man Abraham pass into the kingdom; to talk with the apostle Paul; to observe the reaction of the nations to the new world order established by Christ's reign!

These things should be living realities in our minds, and should be implanted with enthusiasm into the minds of our children. The truth must live for us; and for our offspring. To Paul's beautiful reference to the Law we can add the words of the Psalmist:

"The statutes of Yahweh are right, rejoicing the ear; the commandment of Yahweh is pure, enlightening the eyes. . . . Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward" (19:8. 11).

The final words are addressed to fathers exclusively. They emphasise the enormous responsibility which must be borne by the husband, as the head of the family, though of course, they do not exempt mothers from their part in the spiritual education of the children. "Fathers," wrote Paul, "provoke not your children to wrath." This appears to endorse the popular view that parents should never say anything which might upset the children! But that is not so. The word for provoke means to exasperate, irritate, and clearly alludes to fathers making unreasonable demands upon the children, or being inconsistent in disciplining them. It is of little value to manifest strong discipline in the family today, and none at all tomorrow! The children would never know where they stood! Distasteful exhibitions of illtemper on the part of fathers would also come into this category. Be loving, be firm, be kind, but above all, be consistent. Fathers are required "to bring their children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (v. 4 R.S.V).

The word rendered "bring them up" is the same as nourisheth in Ch. 5:29, thus providing a link between the two verses. In the former, the apostle wrote: "No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it." In the latter, Paul reminds fathers that their children are their own flesh. They must cherish the welfare of their

children as they would their own bodies.

The two words, nurture and admonition, discipline and instruction — R.S.V. have been chosen with delicate perception. Nurture is from the Greek *paideia* and signifies *the training of a child, including instruction, education, discipline, rewards and punishments*. Admonition is from the Greek *nouthesia*, which means a putting in mind or, getting the Truth into their heads! Thus in the first of these words we have the training of a child by action; in the second, the training of a child by word. This discipline and instruction is of the Lord, and not of man. It has nothing to do with everyday school work, but concerns spiritual development that will make children: "wise unto salvation" (2 Tim. 3:15).

To summarise, fathers who see the need to nourish and cherish their own bodies, must also see the need to do the like towards their wives and children. We conclude by quoting a most beautiful Psalm, one which is a firm favourite in our home, and which is read at the family table many times during the course of a year:

"Blessed is everyone that feareth Yahweh; that walketh in His ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands; happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olives plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth Yahweh. Yahweh shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel" (Psa. 128).

J. Ullman

What a pleasing sight is a family of obedient children — children who rise at their parents' bidding and hasten to perform their behests — who regard it as an all-sufficient reason that father and mother have bidden or forbidden certain acts. To Israel, this was the first command with promise: "Honour thy father and thy mother." It is good education in our obedience to the Father above. There is, however, a reverse picture in regard to disobedient children, which it is odious to look upon.

Parental Discipline



WHEN parental discipline destroys filial love, it is bad. Veneration is a mixture of fear and love, and is created in every well-organised child by strict discipline and kindness on the part of the parent. But a parent who is always beating, always frowning, scolding and commanding, and never coaxing and caressing a child, can only be feared, and ultimately, disliked. Children can never be beaten into goodness, any more than nations can be persecuted into orthodoxy. They generally love their mothers best, because they are most indulgent; but at last they find that indulgence is weakness, and then they learn to disobey the old lady, as they call her. They fear the father, because he is stern and severe; and at last they dislike him, and avoid his society for his want of sympathy. Were the weakness of both parents combined in one, they would make a virtue. The joint and cordial co-operation of the two sexes make the best discipline for children; but we are sorry to say, that there is very little of that co-operation to be found. The mother is generally a shield from the father, and her opposition always increases his severity, whilst his severity increases her indulgence. Children cannot be well reared unless parents are well married.

John Thomas.

Psalm 128



A delightful picture of domestic unity and happiness is present in Psalm 128. Herein is pictured a contented and devoted mother, the children clinging to her as clusters of fruit to a vine. The worth of a "virtuous woman," says the wise man, is "far above rubies" (Prov. 31:10). The symbology of the vine is interesting from a further viewpoint: the vine requires support. It is not strong enough to stand alone, but requires solid and sturdy framework to grow upon. How

apt in relation to Israel. The nation needed to lean upon Yahweh for support, but often failed to do so (cp. Isa. 5; Matt. 21, etc.). The wife of the Psalm must be ably and strongly supported by her husband in the everyday affairs of the household, and in the spiritual education and strengthening of the family.

Such a wife does not seek her interests outside the home environment, but is found in "the innermost parts" of the home. The welfare of husband and family is her great concern. Her interests and enjoyments in life centre around her family, in association with her devotion to the things of Yahweh. In such atmosphere, children will grow up "like olive plants," which cluster around the parent tree, to reproduce the qualities of the tree from which they have sprung.

The verse emphasises the tremendous influence of the home upon the lives of the children. Therefore this influence should be of a spiritually unifying kind, as beautifully set forth in this Psalm. Repeatedly, the scriptures teach the need for families in the Truth to separate themselves from the evil influences of the world, and unitedly and dedicatedly set their feet and faces towards Zion:

"Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood; that our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace; that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store; that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets; that our oxen may be strong in labour; that there be no breaking in nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets. Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is Yahweh" (Psa. 144:11-15).

The green olive tree is a delightful symbol of light, peace and wellbeing. Thus the Psalmist speaks of himself: "I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever" (Psa. 52:8).

But Scripture also warns of disasters which follow a disregard of God:

"Yahweh called thy name, a green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult He hath

kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken. For Yahweh of Armies, that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee" (Jer. 11:16-17). The national olive tree did not produce the fruit required, and it failed to respond to the loving care of the divine Husbandman. It was therefore uprooted.

The children of Psalm 128, however, are represented as heeding wise parental example, teaching and control. They grow up like olives plants "round about thy table." A warm scene of domestic contentment and cheerful happiness is presented. It suggests mutual love, unity and contentment among the members of the family, such as only can be experienced by "fearing Yahweh" and "walking in His ways."

The faithful, throughout the ages, have valued their children as blessings from Yahweh, to complement their own lives, and provide a continuing testimony to Yahweh's truth from one generation to another. Jacob touchingly referred to his offspring as "the children which God hath graciously given thy servant" (Gen. 33:5). Let us emulate his example. Our children need our warm love, as well as the disciplinary education of the truth. By this means, the happy state portrayed in the Psalm will be manifested within our homes.

Let us think upon these things, so that we are moved by them. They are sufficient to sustain entire families in the truth in their daily living, until the Lord comes to make all our hopes a reality.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

J. Ullman

*For as the days of a tree
are the days of my people,
and Mine Elect shall long enjoy
the work of their hands (Isa. 65:22)*



The Olive Tree



THE olive is a beautiful and durable tree, and its fruits rich and valuable, hence the frequent figurative allusions to it in the Scriptures. The fatness of the olive was proverbial as we see from Judges 9:8-9. Being an evergreen tree it is used as a beautiful symbol of fresh and continued piety, the result of divine blessing. "I am like a green olive tree," says the psalmist (52:8). If we would be like the green olive tree, we must live the life of faith and confidence in God, and in His grace: and remember that the thankful in heart add much to the beauty of their faith. The young sprouts of the olive grow up in graceful circuit from the roots of the older trees, and so the psalmist sings "Thy children like olive plants round about thy table." This green and spreading tree was an object of great beauty, and the prophets refer to it thus. Speaking again of Israel and Judah, Jeremiah says, "The Lord called thy name a green olive tree, fair and of goodly fruit" (ch. 11:16). But when the vine or the olive planted in the pleasant vineyard becomes, and remains unfruitful, though luxuriant in foliage and promising in appearance, they must be cut down and cast into the fire of judgment. Hosea gives us a lovely description of these chosen people in their future blessedness, saying: "His branches shall spread and his beauty shall be as the olive tree. They shall grow as the vine." This is the fruit of God's favour which shall be produced in them, so that at last His grace will not have been bestowed in vain. Holiness is the beauty of the Christian character, so let us see that we adorn our profession with this heavenly grace.

A. Hopkins

We should by all means labour to acquire a deep sense of appreciation for spiritual blessings and be careful to transmit the knowledge of them to others, for this is the surest way of perpetuating them, so that many may choose God and His inexhaustible fulness of blessings as their portion and their All.

The Danger Of Modern Education



HE tragedy of Lot could have been avoided; Lot had deliberately led his family into an environment of wickedness from which it could not emerge unscathed. It constitutes a warning for today. Our families can suffer likewise. We live in a Sodomitic environment, and need to guard our children against it. Whilst Lot obviously protested at the prevailing wickedness, he did little more. A more vigorous action was required, particularly in regard to his family. Because he failed to take that action, the most terrible tragedy overtook him and it. When Lot took to his heels out of the doomed city, he realised that it had been an extremely poor bargain that he had made when he had left Abram for the cities of the plain. We, too, can bargain away the future of our children for apparent present advantage.

Evidence is accumulating which reveal the extent to which the world is claiming the children of its citizens; and those of Christadelphian families with the rest. Like Lot on the heights of barren Bethel, looking down upon the well-watered plains of Jordan (as they were then), the world offers much of present, material advantage. Its rewards appear attractive: big money, ample leisure, respect of persons, material advantage. But the pay is poor compared with the riches that Christ offers.

To gain the most from its children, the world has to prise them away from the influence of the Word of God. It does this by education, and the fruits of the fearful thing that the flesh has established under this caption is seen in the revolt of youth which is incidental to the Western World. Youth is revolting against every form of restraint, so that the wickedness of Sodom is becoming more obvious. The teaching of Evolution in the Schools is helping to that end, for once this is established in the mind of an individual, it lessens, if it does not altogether destroy, any responsibility towards God. Granted Evolution is a fact, it is obvious that the Bible is fiction; and it follows that the God of the Bible can no longer be viewed with respect. He is manifested as the Author of confusion, and not of peace.

Evolution is being taught to the young children in the curriculum of State Schools throughout Australia, and this imposes a tremendous responsibility on parents. It is becoming more and more necessary for them to supervise what is being taught their children, and to warn them against such teaching. If necessary, a protest should be lodged with the teacher if the child is penalised in any way for refusing to accept this teaching which is opposed to the Bible. Evolution will destroy a child's respect for the Bible and the Truth; but now a worse challenge is in evidence.

This is an age of permissiveness, and this evil, immoral influence reaches right down into the schools, and challenges your children's spiritual development. It is normal school practise, in teaching composition and English, to direct children to certain reading which will help their vocabulary and word power. In the past, in English, novels by such authors as Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Hutchinson, and others, were placed in the hands of children for reaching. They were relatively harmless. However, such books are outmoded today, and replaced by modern writers, many of whom are so extreme in the language used, that obscene expressions find their presence in their books. The claim is that this is the language of today; and the children should learn it. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the teacher to educate the children in the use of such "language" if necessary.

Some of the literature used by the State Education Department would have been considered pornographic a few years back, but is today being placed into the hands of your children. The printed word is powerful, and it only needs a little of this to seep into the mind of the child, for the thought and idea of immorality to develop. What is the cause, of the wave of petty crime and immorality that today stems from the very seats of so-called learning; the schools and (worse) the universities? It is this very contempt of spiritual virtues engendered by such instruction as referred to above.

In Sodom, immorality had become the accepted thing, and the wicked were supported in opposition to the righteous. That is the situation today. Lot protested, but did little else, and his family was affected. Therefore in view of Christ's warning, we cannot afford to be complacent. We might reason that our children would never be influenced

by these conditions. The Word teaches otherwise: "Can a man take fire into his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?" The children of such faithful men as Eli, Samuel, David and others, were adversely influenced by their environment. Our children can be likewise.

What is the antidote? Firstly, in the home. Carefully supervise the ideas being implanted in the mind of your child. Do not hesitate to protest to the teacher if such is necessary. Encourage your child to refuse to accept teaching that is at variance with the Word. Show how strongly the truth of the Bible is endorsed by fulfilling prophecy. Encourage him or her to give first place to the things of God, even in the choice of a career. We claim that Christ is at the door: how foolish if when doing so, we deliberately set temptations in the way of our children in order that they may find some material advancement. Teach them to be content with the humbler circumstances of life, and to render service to their Creator in the days of youth (Eccles. 12:1). Warn them of the conditions that might be expected as indicated by the predictions of Christ "as in the days of Lot and Noah," and teach them to resist such influences when met with in the school yard or in the school room.

Secondly, we feel that a protest should be lodged with the Education Department, in regard to the type of literature being placed by it into the hands of children to read. At present, if the child refuses to read the book, it will be penalised as regards progress marks; but surely we have a conscientious objection to this literature being officially forced upon our children, requesting that if necessary, alternative literature be made available to our children, without them being penalised as far as their school status is concerned.

Let us not be complacent about this, otherwise the tragedy of Lot's family might become our personal tragedy. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Christ has forewarned us, and underlines his exhortation with the words: "Remember Lot's wife." Let us remember her, and play our part to protect our children from the vicious, evil environment in which they are today found, and which shall become an increasing trial to them as the age moves to its close.

Problems At School



It is now becoming more and more necessary to object to some of the "education" activities in which our children are required to participate at School, and some parents have expressed difficulty in having their wishes respected in this regard. There is this at least in favour of the present School system: and that is, that most teachers and Headmasters acknowledge the right of parents to train (or not train, as the case may be!) their own children in the way they wish, and this can be an asset to us in our endeavour to uphold the principles of the Truth and to lead our children in the path of life.

The following letter from a teacher to parents in response to the initial brief objection of the latter to their children participating in certain "out of school activities," and the suggested reply, may be of some assistance in formulating our objections in similar circumstances. (The explanation was accepted without further comment, and an alternative activity arranged for the child).

Letter from Teacher:

"Thank you for your letter explaining your feelings concerning your child's non-participation in out-of-school activities. I am rather disturbed, however, at your refusal to allow your child to take part in what should be a rewarding part of their education.

"The activities in the programme are all of a wholesome nature, designed to show our students some useful pastimes once they leave school. More and more young people these days are finding themselves with an increasing amount of spare time on their hands which they sometimes use by watching too much television or in extreme (but becoming much more common) cases, roaming the streets. Our year 10 students have a maximum of only two years of high school ahead of them. Some intend to leave at the end of this year while others may stay to do 11th year. Time is therefore very limited to actually show them how to perform, how to behave, and where to go for the activities in the programme.

"If you still wish for your child not to be involved in the out of school activities, an alternative programme will be

available for them during the excursion times.

Yours faithfully, (Sgd). Senior Teacher."

Suggested Reply

"We have received your letter concerning our child's education course, and would like to thank you for your interest. Firstly, please understand that we do not wish to be awkward or hard to get along with (although it may sometimes seem that way!).

"However, we do have a very definite and particular aim in training our children and endeavour to instil in them principles which we are convinced (and are confident we can convince them) are right and true: these are principles by which we live, and arise out of a religious belief. Our approach in these matters, whilst it may seem to you to be negative, is actually very positive, and far from depriving our children from any wholesome, healthy recreation and entertainment, we believe we provide far more than most parents: but these activities are engaged in as a family and with the friends with whom we mix in the Christadelphian community. It is not our practice to take the children to places of organised recreation and entertainment, such as is proposed in the physical education course for the remainder of the year.

"Because of the many wholesome activities in which we are engaged as a family, we have no need (or time) for TV — we do not have a set, and so do not have the problem of any of the children watching it excessively: nor can we foresee any likelihood of the children roaming the streets in time to come, with our family situation as it is.

"We would like to co-operate with you wherever possible in the very difficult task you have of organising a programme to suit all tastes, but feel that this particular aspect of the course would be detrimental to our overall aims for our child and therefore we would greatly appreciate it if some alternative arrangements could be made for them during the coming weeks. If you would like to discuss the basis for our objections further, or perhaps a very brief outline of the Christadelphian beliefs, we would be very happy to make a time at your convenience.

"Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience caused you or your staff in this matter.

Yours sincerely, A. Parent." P. Knowles

The only way you can break your children of the habit of copying the unseemly talk of their schoolfellows and workfellows is by laying before them what God requires of those that obey Him. Show that He has laid it down that our lips are not our own to use as we please (Psa. 12:4), and that at the judgment seat the words made use of will either justify or condemn (Matt. 12:37).

Our Children At Christ's Coming



AS to children who may be alive when the Lord returns and sends for the members of His household, the question is, will no provision be made for the households of the faithful? If we are to judge from Deity's operations in the past, we are justified in expecting that there will be so. Respect has always been shown to the kindred of those who have been the objects of divine regard. Noah's family is one instance; Lot's family is another. His sons-in-law were by command of the angels, invited to escape the impending judgment, but laughed the invitation to scorn. Rahab's family were spared from the destruction that befell Jericho. Is it not possible that similar favour will be shown when the greatest judgment of all arrives? Is it not possible that households may be invited to accompany the saints eastward? As a matter of course, the saints alone are called to judgment, and they alone enter the Kingdom of God in the sense of obtaining the life, honour and glory of it; but mortal subjects will have to be provided for as well as Kings and priests; and is it not possible the saints may have a commission to secure among them a place for such of their kindred as shall have faith and docility enough to leave home and country for the seat of the NEW POWER, there to shelter in the King's refuge until the judgment is overpast, and afterwards to settle among the tribes of Israel as strangers and sojourners in the Land, to whom a portion will be divided? (Ezek. 47:22). If so all difficulty about children would be at an end.

A.T.J.

Training Our Children For Christ's Coming



WE have much to encourage us in the prosecution of our arduous toil in the rearing of children. We have great encouragement in the hope of their ultimately attaining to immortality, either at the coming of the Lord, or should that glorious event take place before they attain to the obedience of faith, then at a future period. Apart from this, our efforts are without object or recompense. To accomplish this object, an enlightened daughter of Sarah will make every effort.

Our position in the matter is peculiar in living at a time when we may expect the immediate return of the Lord. With some, this is an anxiety. It need not be. If the Lord come before our children have attained the years of responsibility, they will doubtless be incorporated in the great work to be accomplished among the seed of Abraham. What a great incentive this is to have the children well instructed in the truth. In this relation, the Sunday school appears in its true light, as an aid in the work of making the children acquainted with the things of God. With their heads and hearts full of these things, looking, like ourselves, with intense longing for the time when all families of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham and his seed, can we refrain from entertaining the hope that they shall live through the time of trouble incidental to the setting up of the kingdom? To be gathered with the Israel according to the flesh, and ultimately upon the same principle as all others who have attained to immortality, obtain life in the perfect state, which lies beyond the aion of the kingdom? The hope and aspiration that she may be fitting her children for such a destiny, fills every mother's hands with noble work. The remembrance that she is entrusted with the training of those, who by early lessons may be led into the way of life from which they will not afterwards depart, will be to her an incentive, a solace, and a stay when strength and patience may be sorely tried.

Sis. J. Roberts

The Dressing Of The Children



IN the dressing of her children, the effects of the blessed hope will be seen. The sister-wife and mother will no more accept the popular standing in the outward adorning of her children, than in the formation of her hope. She will regulate this like her own attire, by the maxims of the high calling. She will not be anxious that her little ones shall appear in full feather as exponents of the newest fashion. She will appreciate a due attention to health and cleanliness in their attire, but she will teach them, as she has come to be instructed herself, that the vanities and follies attendant upon gay dressing are forms of the evil which everywhere prevails; and that though beautiful and attractive to the youthful eye, they are to be eschewed as something calculated to engender forgetfulness of God and the coming of Christ for which we are all preparing.

Sis. J. Roberts

The Mother, who, in the quietude of home devotes herself to the wise training of her children, performs a part which, for its far-reaching effect cannot be exceeded in importance.

The word will call for many an inward battle between inclination and duty, and will cause many a headache and even heartache. Let us, however, go forward undaunted by difficulties, knowing that we have the strength of God's authority and His encouragement behind us.

Directing The Footsteps Of The Young



NOT the least among present-day problems peculiar to sisters in the home, is the need for resisting modern influences upon the minds of the young. In counteracting these influences, the sister, in her capacity as mother, commences the wise training of her children in their earliest years. Their minds and hearts are directed into a knowledge and love of God, and a deep reverence for His Holy Word. First impressions cling tenaciously, and greatly influence youthful dispositions. It is upon the rock foundation of Holy Writ, therefore, that the God-fearing mother prayerfully and regularly builds up the characters of her children. She instructs, directs, counsels and warns. She sedulously engenders an earnest love for "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report." Unquestioning obedience is insisted upon, and, where necessary, due correction administered and punishment inflicted. Unlike their worldly contemporaries, her children are taught that disregard of divine matters, disobedience to parents and discourtesy to elders, are displeasing to God. In the opinion of the modern generation, an upbringing of this kind is old-fashioned and narrow-minded.

To prevent the infiltration of these pernicious influences, a God-fearing mother is untiring in her efforts and unceasing in her vigil. She adopts practical ways and means of keeping the world outside, and of maintaining that high standard of holiness, which from the children's early days has been fostered and preserved. Divine matters are given first place in the daily programme, and the family united by the sanctities of the Truth. The home is a school of wise discipline, where precept and example are practised and understood. Healthy and profitable recreation is arranged during periods of holiday; the children are taught to appreciate the beauties of the universe, and to know the joy of healthful activity. They gradually begin to realize the need for, and value of self-denial and service, and to esteem the privilege which such knowledge confers. They are trained to take their places as useful members of the family circle — the boys drilled into polite and gentlemanly

behaviour, and the girls acknowledged as "mother's right hand." Their companions are selected from those whose bent is in a godly direction. Their taste for reading is encouraged, though their choice of books is closely scrutinized and carefully supervised. Educational and instructive books are good, and are allocated a place on the bookshelf, but no unwholesome novel or magazine is found in the household where godliness is practised and purity prevails.

Thus, in wisely directing and guiding the footsteps of the young, in inculcating the need for reverence and respect, in radiating a spirit of happiness and love, in discoursing upon the glorious truths of God, in repelling and excluding the influences of the world, in attaining and maintaining high morals and ideals, in developing and cherishing a love for things divine, through difficulty and trial, in season and out of season, is found the path of true parental wisdom, and the full meaning of the words of Scripture, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

V.V.

Comfort For The Childless



AMONGST those things never satisfied is "the barren womb", Prov. 30:16 for when God created male and female he said, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it". Children, then, are the purpose and fulfilment of marriage. The God given desire for children became intensified when sin entered into the world. The sentence on the woman, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception", was essential to replenish an earth now filled with violence, disease and death.

Sorrow had entered into the life of the woman. "But as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world", John 16:21. But what of the woman who does not experience that joy?

"Children are an heritage of Yahweh and the fruit of the womb is his reward," Psa. 127:3, "happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them," v.5. But Yahweh has not blessed with children merely to satisfy selfish desires for it is written, "And did not he make one? And wherefore one? that he may seek a Godly seed," Mal. 2:15. Children do not belong to their parents, they are only lent to them that they may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord as His children. Those whose quiver is full are indeed blessed and should acknowledge it, for not all are so blessed. Many an otherwise happy marriage is tinged with sadness because the womb is barren. In your converse with the childless be gentle, "guard the door of your lips". A thoughtless, though perhaps well meaning, comment to such a sister may hurt deeply. Comments such as, "its about time you had a family", or "perhaps you are not meant to have children" or, "of course you haven't got any children have you?" become a sword piercing her own soul also.

Remember your sister from whom the fruit of the womb has been withheld. Her lot is often lonely hours of private grief and weeping for a baby to hold to her breast, to love and to cherish.

How grieved was Hannah as she wept because, "her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret,

because Yahweh had shut up her womb" 1 Sam. 1:6. Hannah, loved dearly by her husband, desired a child as the fruit of their love. We do not despise her for this. Her's was not just a selfish desire. Her desire was for a redeemer in Israel who would vindicate the ways of Yahweh before the unrighteous nation. Hannah asked for a child whom she could dedicate to Yahweh. Distress had purified her faith! Have we the measure of Hannah's faith?

If the childless have consolation, it is in the knowledge that the path of sadness has been trodden before by many faithful sisters over the centuries. What desperation drove Sarah to give her maid to her own husband! Sarah was 90 years old when God gave her conception and the seed of promise was born. Rebekah comforted Isaac after his mother's death, but she was not comforted. "And Isaac intreated Yahweh for his wife because she was barren: and Yahweh was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived", Gen. 25:21.

Today medical science can sometimes find the physical cause of childlessness, but it is Yahweh who gives or withholds the fruit of the womb according to His purpose. There is a purpose known only to Him; our lives are in His hands. In His good time He will bless if we patiently endure the trial of our faith without wavering. "Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised," Heb. 11:11.

The question often asked is "why?" "why must I be childless?". Our Father knows what is best for us. We are assured that "all things are working together for good to them that love God", Rom. 8:28, and that each has a trial to endure. Our horizon must never be bounded by our own trials, each must think of another's needs. Endurance is character building. It is the process by which faith is tried that it may become more precious than gold and "might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ," 1 Peter 1:7.

When the years of childlessness have passed and fruit is eventually given, how much more precious a little one becomes. How much more earnest the spiritual training and education of such a child that He may be a Godly seed.

What if we are not to be so blessed? Has not the Father called us to be espoused to Christ? Are we not united as

the family of God? Can we not share in the blessing of others by assisting in the care and training of the children of our sisters in the ecclesia? To those who are parents, remember the joy, the love and the warmth your children may bring into another's loneliness if you allow.

The natural defence of the childless avoiding children should be resisted. To enjoy children, and take a positive role in their development, become dedicated to Sunday School teaching or to cheerfully helping families in need with your personal assistance and encouragement. The dearest brother and sister I remember were truly a father and mother in Israel, though their home never rang with the sound of their own children's laughter. But it was a home open to children and many were brought into the truth by them. These were begotten by the Word, and the brother and sister became greatly loved by them.

Even our Lord, who was "touched with the feelings of our infirmities," Heb. 4:15, loved children, though marriage and home were denied him. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not", he said. Surely even Jesus felt the longing for a family of his own, but recognised the greater purpose for which he had been born. He shall yet "see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied", Isa. 53:11. It is often forgotten that men also long for children of their own. The Ethiopian eunuch was reading Isaiah 53 as Philip approached, and took comfort in the words of the prophet, "Neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree . . . even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off," Isa. 56 3,5.

Soon we shall be called to the wedding; we shall be united with our heavenly bridegroom. "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith Yahweh," Isa. 54:1.

Do not let sorrow overwhelm you, joy cometh in the morning. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us," Rom. 8:18. In hope we look to the day when we shall receive, "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," Isa. 61:3.

Sis. J. Cresswell



Chapter Seven

Honorable Women

Sisters can play an important part in the work of the Truth in the making and unmaking of an ecclesia. Let sisters recognise their power, and use it faithfully. How much sadder and harder would Christ's life have been if women had not used their brains, wisely and kindly. One received him into her house (Luke 10:38). Others "ministered unto him of their substance" (Luke 8:3). The same remark applies to Paul. What grateful allusions to sisters are contained in the apostle's writings — Priscilla, "my helper"; Mary, "who bestowed much labour on us;" Phoebe, "a succourer of many," and others who laboured with him in the gospel (Phil. 4:3). Yes, a woman's influence is great both for good and evil. It always has been so. It was a woman who led Adam into sin, and a woman who kept David from it (1 Sam. 25:32-33). A woman stiffened the back of Barak, and helped in the matter of Israel's deliverance (Judges 4 & 5), and a woman assisted to make poor Elijah's life unhappy, and bring God's nation to ruin (1 Kings 17). It was a woman, too, who was chosen by God to succour this prophet and preserve his life. Let sisters appreciate their God-given power and use it lawfully, not to lead man into wrong-doing, nor to bolster him up in it, but to strengthen him in resisting it, which can invariably be done by a little gentle, loving, commonsense talk. Let sisters remember that their responsibility is commensurate with their ability. Let them think, as a warning, of the outcome of Eve's folly (Gen. 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:14-15), and of Jezebel's wickedness and its sequel (2 Kings 9:36-37); and, as an encouragement, the commendation ascribed in the Scriptures to Deborah and Abigail, and the honourable mention by Christ of the widow of Sarepta.

Mary



BLESSED is she that believeth, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord (Luke 1:45). With these words, Elisabeth addressed Mary her cousin who had come to visit her prior to the birth of her son John. Mary, in contrast to Zacharias, had believed Gabriel when he spoke to her of the coming birth of her son, and willingly placed herself in the hands of Yahweh (Luke 1:38). She had revealed complete belief, trust and faith in all that had been told her, and submitted to all that was required of her though it brought her under trial and distress.

Her name is the Greek form of the Hebrew Marah, signifying bitterness (Ruth 1:20), and Mary experienced much bitterness, as Simeon predicted (Luke 2:35). She was sorely tried as to character, for at first Joseph refused to believe the virgin birth, and contemplated rejecting her (Matt. 1:18-20); she suffered privations, living in extreme poverty (Luke 2:7); she knew fear, for the threat of murder was directed against her and her son; she experienced insecurity, fleeing as a fugitive to Egypt from the anger of Herod (Matt. 2:13-14). She knew the loneliness of widowhood, the cares of a large family, the mother's pain of seeing her son misunderstood, derided, and finally crucified as a criminal. Yes, "a sword pierced through her own life also" (Luke 2:35). Mary impresses as being trustful, courageous and yet gentle. She gave herself unreservedly to whatever Yahweh required of her, and in this she showed outstanding trust. She shouldered the burdens of life that rested so heavily upon her in such a fashion as to reveal that she was also a woman of courage. Yet she was gentle and self-effacing. That is shown by the way she submitted to the guidance and care of Joseph at all times, permitting him to take control of her life, and that of her young son.

Those virtues of trust, courage and gentleness stemmed from her faith, a faith which finds expression in the wonderful song of joy and thanksgiving that burst from her lips when she met Elisabeth after the visit of Gabriel: a song that proclaimed her hope, for she sung, not only that

“all generations would call her blessed,” but would do so because of what would be accomplished through her son. Yahweh’s mercy would be revealed to those that fear Him from generation to generation (Luke 1:50), but, on the other hand, He will “scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts; put down the mighty from their seats, and exalt them of low degree,” helping Israel and fulfilling the promises to Abraham (vv. 51-55).

Mary’s song is very similar to that of Hannah, on the birth of her son, Samuel. Hannah saw beyond the birth of her son, and the rivalry between Peninnah and herself, to the rivalry of the two women of the Apocalypse (Jezebel and the Bride of Christ), and to the triumph of the King Messiah. She concluded her song with the statement: “He (Yahweh) shall give strength unto His King, and exalt the horn of His anointed (Christ)” (1 Sam. 2:10). She sung thus, at a time, when there was no king in Israel! As Hannah’s song proclaimed the promise; Mary’s song recorded the partial fulfilment.

Mary evidently rejoiced in her son’s public assumption of the Messianic office, and fully believed in him. But she ventured improperly to direct his actions at the Marriage of Cana, and thus drew from him a respectful but firm rebuke. It was necessary for her to understand that she could only share in his work as a disciple, not as a directive. While as her son he gave her reverence, as the Messiah and Saviour he could only regard her as a follower who needed the salvation he came to bring as much as others.

A similar truth was brought out on the next recorded incident in which she appears. Jesus was teaching the people, and Mary and his brethren desired to see him. Apparently they wished to restrain him from a course which seemed to be bringing upon him opposition and peril. His brethren were losing faith in him, and swayed by their influence, Mary became confused, and joined them in their determination to restrain him. This brought forth the implied rebuke of the Lord: “Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother” (Matt. 12:46-50).

It impressively told the lesson that was enunciated by the Lord on another occasion, when he declared that

“flesh profiteth nothing.” Fleshly relationships count for nought if the Truth is denied. Mary and his brethren must accept his higher role as Son of God, and Saviour of the world, or he would repudiate all relationship.

Tradition has much more to say regarding Mary, and the Apostasy has deified her. In doing so, however, it has destroyed the beauty manifested in the lovely character of the trustful young girl of Nazareth, the self-effacing young wife of Joseph, and the faithful, poverty-stricken widow of despised Galilee who, in spite of all her doubts and confusion, still believed in her Son, and followed him to the cross.

What a glorious future awaits Mary and all like her. She is yet to witness the full glory of his royal majesty, and witness him as “the king in his beauty” (Isa. 33:17).

Hannah



OD was very real to Hannah; not only as the Creator; not only as the Redeemer of her nation, but as the One, who, above all others, understood her, and her reactions to the increasing bitterness of each succeeding year in her life. The supreme honour of an Israelitish woman to bear children had thus far been denied her. If we interpret 1 Sam. 1:5-6 correctly, we are led to understand that this barrenness was of the Lord, in order that Hannah's reactions might be fully worked out. What would her attitude to God be, as year followed year, and she witnessed the ever increasing children from Peninnah? Would her personal faith in the God of Israel waver? Would it grow dim? or bitter? Who would help her to keep strong in faith, despite the sorrowfulness of the way? God was the supreme reality in her life, and although she did indeed experience bitterness of soul, the fact remains that, out of that very bitterness her faith ascended to heaven in the words of her

prayer. It resulted in Hannah vowing two vows; that she would give the child to God utterly, and see that he would observe the Nazarite vow.

God was pleased at the prayer of Hannah. He was pleased at the reaction of one of His dear children to the chastening cross laid upon her. How true it is, that "Whomsoever the Lord loveth He chasteneth." The exhortation cries aloud to us all, that it is not so much the trial we undergo, as our reaction to it that counts. God was happy to observe that His handmaid never indulged in an orgy of self pity; she did not sit down and say — "Why did this happen to me?" Instead, through pure love of God and her tremendous faith in Him, her very cross was converted into a crown. He who previously had closed Hannah's womb now was pleased to grant her fruit. So Hannah, the once despised, became a most honoured mother in Israel, in giving to the nation that notable child who became one of Israel's greatest Judges.

We are not told much about the domestic background of Elkanah and Hannah. It is plain, however, that Hannah was the first wife of Elkanah; that he loved her dearly, and so hoped for a child from her. But the years passed, and eventually Elkanah took a second wife. He had forgotten the ways of God, in Eden, which ordained that man should take but one wife at a time. He forgot the lesson of his forebear Abraham, in his ill-advised union with Hagar. Nevertheless, the record is silent of any sign of Hannah's reproach to Elkanah for his action; indeed, so simply did Elkanah love her, that, when offering portions for the family circle, he offered an extra portion for Hannah, because he loved her. Self restraint then, is seen to be another lovely virtue of Hannah. She disciplined herself to suffer in silence. Thus how wonderful must have been that moment when she came to her husband, and told him the glad news that, at long last, she was to become more than a wife — even the mother of his own son!

What of her personal relationship to the other woman? Here, surely, was her hardest test: to endure the taunts, the veiled insults, year after year; to watch the family increase, whilst she remained barren. These Bible characters are as real as modern ones; they laugh and weep, they rejoice and are sad, for the same reasons as do we; this binds them to us in that wondrous link of faith with Peninnah; but not in what she did, but in what she did not do. She never

returned evil for evil, and thereby aggravated an impossible situation. Maybe her very silence goaded Peninnah the more, for Hannah was content to wait in faith. Was her decision right? We look in vain for any outstanding record of the many children born to Peninnah. They all lived and died undistinguished from so many others; but not so Samuel. He was outstanding. In our walk in the Truth it is not so much the trials that count; as our reactions to them. The very bitterness of Hannah's grief caused her to turn to God, for she was a woman of faith.

J.A.S.



Things To Remember

The value of time.
The success of perseverance.
The pleasure of working.
The dignity of simplicity.
The worth of character.
The influence of example.
The obligation of duty.
The wisdom of economy.
The virtue of patience.
The improvement of talent.
The joy of originating.
The power of kindness.

Tabitha

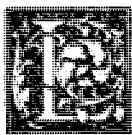


HE recôrd concerning Tabitha is very brief, nevertheless it is highly suggestive. "She was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did." What the "good works" were, is not specified. But from the scriptural use of the term "good works" we know that Tabitha must have exhibited a very comprehensive obedience. "Good works" is a Scriptural phrase embracing our whole duty. It includes sound doctrine (John 6:29; 2 Tim. 3:16,17); upright, irreproachable conduct towards those who are without (1 Pet. 2:12); and a loving and faithful discharge of those duties, which association with those in the truth entails (Tit. 2:4, 5, 7). It is not uncommon, even amongst those in the household, to hear such characters as Tabitha spoken of as if their works proceeded merely from rich natural endowments. This is a mistake. Tabitha could only shew forth good works through having brought her mind into captivity to the law of Christ. The natural mind is contrary to this law. This admits of no exception. Therefore when an example of obedience is presented to us, we know that it is the outcome of a struggle — a crucifying process. Had Tabitha waited until she felt a natural liking or aptitude for obeying Christ's commands, we should have had no such record of her as that contained in Acts 9. In addition to Tabitha's other good works, her alms-deeds receive especial mention. She was evidently in the habit of plying her needle for the poor, for after her death we have the interesting incident of the display of the garments and little coats which she had made. There is no evidence that Tabitha founded any such institution as the sewing class or Dorcas meeting of the present day. This class is, no doubt productive of good, inasmuch as collective forms of working create a stimulus which is a means of provoking unto good works. Tabitha, however, seems to have entered upon her task alone — the garments had been made by her own hands (v.39). It is an example well worthy of imitation by those who cannot engage with others upon such a work. Tabitha was evidently a pattern of industry. Her works made this manifest. This wise use of her time must in itself have proved to her a stronghold. A woman who fears

God eats not the bread of idleness. Those who strive to act as Tabitha acted will not lay themselves open to the long list of sins that idleness brings in its train: the wandering about from house to house tattling, the busying about others affairs, and the speaking of things which ought not to be spoken of. There is a strong current of Gentilism around us, and we have to guard against being carried along with it. The Gentiles boast in their idleness. Let us redeem the time while it is day. Let us contrive to make sacrifices that we may be enabled to reach forth our hands to the poor and needy. The Gentiles devote much time to visiting their well-to-do neighbours. Let us take heed that we neglect not to visit the sick and afflicted. When we are tempted in any of these directions let us think of Tabitha.

Let no one think that, whilst he is unmindful of the poor, he is in favour with God. Only those who show a kindly feeling towards their less fortunate fellows needs look for salvation. Hath he oppressed the poor and needy? Then "he shall not live." Hath he given his bread to the hungry? Then "he shall surely live, saith the Lord" Ezek. 18.

Lois and Eunice



LOIS and Eunice are Godly women, whose work is brought under our notice by the apostle Paul. He speaks of them as possessing "unfeigned faith," from which it is evident that they adorned the doctrine of Christ. Of the various ways in which their faith manifested itself we have no direct record. We have, however a very strong inference of one direction which their work took in Paul's statement concerning the faith of Timothy. This he directly connects with the faith of the two sisters, "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy

grandmother Lois and thy mother Eunice." Faith is no heritage naturally transmitted from parent to child, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Therefore, the only way in which the faith of Lois and Eunice could be transmitted to Timothy would be by implanting the truths of scripture in his young mind. This conclusion is borne out by the statement of the apostle: "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures," 2 Tim. 3:15. God Himself laid down the plan to be pursued. "These words . . . shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." How faithfully Lois and Eunice carried out these instructions. Timothy is a testimony. Paul might well commend these sisters for their faith. Few things require greater faith than the training of children in things spiritual. The work is so slow and tedious, and results are so imperceptible. The temptation to hand the burden over to others and engage in more expeditious work is great. Those who feel thus tempted should take courage from the case of Lois and Eunice, and recognise, as they must have done, that the teaching of children is a divinely imposed task. It is not God's will that we should preach to others and leave our own children to perish from lack of knowledge, or want of timely and wise reproof. Some persuade themselves that they are not adapted for teaching. God does not countenance this non-adaptability. His command has gone forth: teach your young women and your children; and He expects the custodians of His truth to qualify themselves for the work. God made it a ground of rebuke to certain ones that when they ought to have been teachers they themselves stood in need of being taught. Did ever anyone find herself unable to teach a child that with what she herself was thoroughly familiar — provided of course it was within the child's capacity? Surely not. If we had mastered Bible-lessons and narrative as completely as we have mastered the alphabet and multiplication table, we should not experience any insurmountable difficulty in imparting the knowledge to others. Lois and Eunice appear to have kept young Timothy's education under their own supervision. In this we should do well to follow them. The principle contained in the words: "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge," it is

perilous to depart from. Let us not go in opposition to it by placing our children where they will imbibe the divinely abhorred fables of Christendom. We cannot make the paths for the young feet too straight, "train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." Lois and Eunice were greatly rewarded for their labour, and doubtless they will be still more so in the day of judgment. Happy shall we be if we follow in their footsteps, that we may participate in a like reward.

Lemuel's Mother



SISTERS can play a most important part in the home by encouraging their husbands in the work of the Truth, and encouraging that small congregation with which Yahweh has blessed them, their children, in the way of righteousness. How often can the influence of faithful women be traced through the Word. At least ten sisters are commended by Paul in Romans 16. Let sisters guide their children wisely, by directing them to the things of God, and impressing them with the importance of "seeking first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness," in the assurance that all necessary things will be added by our "heavenly Father who knoweth that we have need" of them (Matt. 6:32-33).

Wise indeed was the teaching which king Lemuel's mother conveyed to her son (Prov. 31:1). Let us recognise that the words of this exemplary woman bear the seal of divine inspiration. In view of the wholesomeness of such instruction, well might the inspired writer of Proverbs enjoin his readers to "forsake not the law of thy mother." "Bind them," says he, referring to parental admonitions, "continually upon thy heart, and tie them about thy neck."

How do we stand, dear sisters, as touching the instruction which we convey to our sons. Is it worthy of the treatment above described? The wise mother of the Book of Proverbs sought to brace up her son for the requirements of his responsible position, and to warn him against

the sins which would be peculiar to it. By this example being placed before us, it is evidently one which God would have us follow. Ere long, to all appearances, the Truth's affairs will be largely in the hands of the children of the brethren and sisters. Should these coming custodians of God's work fall short in regard to their great privilege and responsibility, let it not be through failure on our part to counsel them wisely.

As a means of discharging our duty, let us hold aloft those standards of manly excellence which God Himself has provided. Let us teach our sons that God looks not to faultless clothing and distinguished appearance, or to education and rank, or to powers of oratory. These things are not so much as named in God's list of the necessary qualifications of a tried man. What God requires is a man who has behind him a career of self-restraint and plodding, humble work. Let us put our sons in the way of serving an apprenticeship in such necessary qualities as industry, purity, vigilance, sobriety, modesty, hospitality, aptitude for learning, from those instructed in the Word, and for teaching, when in contact with the alien, and in the Sunday School. Let us counsel them to be temperate, not given to the love of money and covetousness, or to quarrelling, striving and unseemly contention (1 Tim. 3:2,3). Let us encourage them to be faithful and regular in the ecclesial meetings, but let us not fail to point out in connection with this, that the object in view must be the exaltation of God, and not self, and that the man who reverses the Scriptural injunction to be swift to hear and slow to speak is no blessing to his brethren and sisters.

Were king Lemuel's mother in our midst, we may be sure that she would not only emphasise all these matters in the ears of her son, but that she would forewarn, and so forearm him against those sins of the last days which Paul so vividly predicted. Said this faithful servant of God: "Men shall be . . . despisers of those that are good." We have only to mention a good man's name, be he prophet or apostle, to find how rampant is this sin in the world. And who has not seen it at work even in the ecclesias?

Let us strive to fortify our sons against this woeful sin of these last days by teaching them to respect those, who, from years of exemplary work in the Truth, are undoubtedly good men from the divine standpoint. Let us remember, however, that our sons are not likely to respect the breth-

ren unless they are first taught to revere and listen to their parents. Disobedience to parents is another unholy trait which Paul indicated would be a feature of the present time. Let us early direct our energies towards securing from our sons, dutiful behaviour towards both father and mother. He who despises father and mother, and those whom God esteems, must, of necessity, be a despiser of God.

Lemuel's mother appealed to her son on the ground of his kingly office. Our sons do not hold this high position. In the mercy of God, however, the gospel has called them, no less than ourselves, to the rulership of the age to come, and as shown by Paul, we can appeal to them on the ground of what is seemly conduct for those who will enter upon the exalted position of kings and priests in the Kingdom of God. As Paul indicated to Timothy, there is an etiquette divinely prescribed for the "house of God," and it is necessary that this be learnt and observed by those who desire to associate with the immortal royalties of the future.

How to advise Lemuel concerning his choice of a wife was undoubtedly a matter of grave concern with his mother. She adopts the expedient of placing before him a word picture of the traits to be found in an exemplary woman. The picture exhibits a large hearted, generous, industrious housewife, bracing herself up to the performance of service without stint. To her husband she is loyal, to her children faithful, to her employees considerate, with hand stretched forth to the needy. Her whole career is regulated by divine counsel: "She openeth her mouth with wisdom and in her tongue is the law of kindness." How beautiful to behold is the outcome! Praised by her husband, blessed by her children, and in favour with God: "A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." A God-fearing woman may have to endure scorn from the unfaithful, but the praise from on high is certain.

Sis. C.J.

Sarah



ARAH provides outstanding comfort and consolation for sisters of today. She reveals herself to be as much a woman of flesh and blood as they are; a woman fraught with emotions and feelings of love and envy and yet a woman of great spiritual understanding. What she was able to become, sisters may also achieve, if they emulate her positive virtues and learn, as she ultimately did, to put their full trust in Yahweh.

This mother in Israel called Abraham "Lord" in her heart. Her respect for her husband was real, deep and sincere. Her submission to him gained her great respect in his eyes. When she offered her quiet advice he listened to her. Here was "sovereign obedience", Sarah reigning in the heart of her husband.

The display of the power of Abraham's prayer, and the power of God in healing Abimelech and opening the wombs of his household, doubtless did much to perfect the faith of Sarah to receive strength to conceive Isaac. How much then should sisters as the weaker vessel devote themselves to this activity, if they would grow in faith, and receive tangible blessings in their lives.

Sarah's faith brought to maturity by the power of God revealed in her life in the matter of the conception of Isaac, became the springboard for the perfection of Abraham's faith. Her wisdom in the matter of the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, when endorsed by Yahweh, appeased the protestations of her husband, still clinging to his fleshly aspirations in Ishmael. Sisters can therefore exert an extremely valuable influence for good on their husbands, provided they speak as of the oracles of God.

B.P.

Wisdom

*My son attend unto my words,
Within thy heart in Truth;
Incline thine ear to wisdom's ways
And learn in early youth.*

*Apply thy heart to understand
For learning cry indeed;
Shout out, shout out for knowledge true,
For understanding plead.*

*To seek and search with constant care
Must be thy great desire
I dwell indeed within thy heart
And in thy bones as fire.*

*Receive the precious Bible Truths
Forget them not for Aye —
Ponder over lessons learned
Apply them every day.*

*When wisdom enters in the heart
My son, cease thou from strife;
Who walks the ways of uprightness
Doth walk the way of life.*

D.D.



Phoebe



PHOEBE receives mention by Paul as "the succourer of many, and of myself also" (Rom. 16:2). To appreciate Phoebe's work in this direction we must have before our minds the position that Paul and his brethren were placed in, which rendered them in need of succour. It was no honour, from the world's standpoint, to succour Paul. The estimation that the world placed upon him comes out in Paul's pathetic description of his sufferings. He was the subject of hunger, thirst, and nakedness, he was buffeted, of no certain dwelling-place, reviled, persecuted, defamed, and "made as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things." Let us add to this the scorn which we know was heaped upon him by false brethren, and we shall have a little idea of the courage of the sister who had been a "succourer of many, and of myself also." Adam's descendants are all to a greater or lesser degree influenced by what onlookers will think, but this love of approbation is generally admitted to hold its greatest sway over women. In Phoebe, we have an exhibition of its direction in a right channel. She sought God's approval, not man's. Phoebe might have found many excuses for leaving Paul to himself. She might have argued that so many spoke against him that there might be something in it after all, and then, again, what would people say of her? But Phoebe did not give way to such thoughts. She displayed such firmness and strength of character as a full assurance of faith alone can create. She was prepared to judge for herself, and to judge righteous judgment. She knew that the apostle's career had been one of uprightness and fidelity, and she was determined to strengthen his hands, though whole quiverfuls of asp-poisoned arrows assailed him. We have not Paul in our midst today to succour, nevertheless, there are many of Paul's brethren and sisters who stand in need of help. Let us not withhold our help from them because the world or our friends will frown on us. There are few among us who do not have to perform some duty in opposition to the world's opinion. Some of us, perchance, belong to an ecclesia composed of few and poor brethren. Let us not be of those who love the praise of men more

than the praise of God. If we would, under trying circumstances, act as Phoebe acted, we must cultivate an ever-present recognition of God and of the reality of the reward which He has promised to those who obey Him.

Priscilla



PRISCILLA is brought before us in a three-fold character. The first work which is mentioned in connection with her is her united effort with her husband Aquila, to instruct more perfectly Apollos in the Scriptures of Truth (Acts 18:26). A man of Apollos' type, who was already founded on a strong Scriptural basis, would not be one to yield readily to another's opinions. This brings out Priscilla's ability in the capacity of an expert handler of the sword of the spirit. A careless Bible-neglecting sister could not have the privilege of assisting her husband in such a rewarding and responsible work. If we would be Priscillas, we must be careful to keep our memories well stored with Bible truths, and be diligent in making use of these truths whenever we have opportunity. The second feature in Priscilla's character is her great courage. Paul speaks of her as having (in conjunction with her husband) laid down her neck for his sake (Rom. 16:3,4). Priscilla had evidently rendered Paul service when to do so was to risk her own life. She could hardly have been prompted to this merely by friendship. The disciples loved Christ, but forsook him when brought face to face with impending death. Priscilla must have been inspired by a strong sense of duty. Those who have been placed in danger of losing their lives could most fully estimate Priscilla's courage. Nevertheless the instincts of self-preservation, common to the human family, will aid us in realising, to an extent, what it must have cost Priscilla to have thus jeopardised her life. The bravest and hardiest give way when it comes to a question of life and death, especially if the threatened death be ignominious. The secret of Priscilla's bravery must be

sought, not in mere animal courage, but in that courage of which faith is the basis. All the courageous acts of Bible heroes have been the outcome of the faith (Heb. 11). Priscilla evidently placed implicit confidence in the promise: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," so that she could boldly say "the Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me." If it were God's will that she should escape, no man could hurt her. If it were God's will that she should die, then let man do his worst. Thus must she have reasoned. God in His mercy has not called us to serve Him in times of persecution such as those in which Priscilla lived. Nevertheless there are many duties in the discharge of which we stand in apprehension of bodily hurt. We can only fulfil these duties by displaying similar courage, though not perhaps in the same degree, to that displayed by Priscilla. The timid sister who has to go a lonely or unpleasant journey to the meetings may think of Priscilla, and take comfort. The sister, too, who, in order to let others enjoy the privilege of attending the meetings, has to tremblingly spend the evening in a house by herself. Let her try and cultivate Priscilla's faith and she will find herself considerably helped in her unpleasant and trying position. God does not expect His children to court unnecessary danger — to take an unsafe road when they could choose a safe one, to leave their doors open when they could shut and lock them; but when they have to face unavoidable danger, He would have them to their duty, leaving the consequences in His hands. The third feature in Priscilla's character comes out in the phrase, twice repeated, "the ecclesia that is in their (Priscilla and Aquila's) house" (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19). This reveals Priscilla's steady, persevering fidelity to the service of the truth. We know — seeing that none are yet perfect — that for a community of believers to meet or dwell in Priscilla's house would mean some inconvenience and much to bear with. Priscilla evidently fortified herself for the strain. Let us strive to cultivate Priscilla's forbearance and steadfastness. Let us not be turned from work in which we might engage by difficulties great and small. Let us desire to serve the Truth, and whether we are called on to lend our hands, our voices, our feet, or our houses, let us do it joyfully, bountifully, not in a grudging half-hearted way.

The Christadelphian mind that is constantly centred around the "wisdom from above" is certain to, in actions, life, and character exhibit symptoms of that which has been learnt.

Logos Vol. 1.

Mary And Martha



CIRCUMSTANCES force some of us to be cumbered with much serving in the battle for existence, but wisdom is, not to let the duties of life be our sole thought, in that they cramp our spiritual outlook, causing us to serve the temporal more than is warranted. We are all familiar with that little domestic scene depicted in Luke's gospel, and perhaps familiarity has obscured our discernment somewhat, causing us to think of Martha, as being a self-centred slave to life's hum-drum routine and activities. However, the Scriptures give us the impression of a capable, outspoken, and faithful woman, having moments of weakness as we all have, yet one who could be relied upon when call came for service. In that little scene above mentioned, the Master has a mild rebuke for Martha, not a positive condemnation. We do well to keep this point in mind when comparing Martha with her more sensitive sister Mary.

Martha had a natural anxiety that all should be just so, in her preparations for entertaining so royal a personage as the Son of the God of Israel, and for the moment was somewhat over-anxious, causing her to comment on her sister Mary's apparent laxity in not giving a helpful hand. She even includes the Master in her remarks, saying, "Lord dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone. Bid her, therefore, that she help me." The Lord's

reply would cause her to meditate much. "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that better part which shall not be taken away from her."

Here, then, we have two women whose natures differ much. Mary, quiet and with a mind more highly attuned to spiritual meditations than her sister, perhaps, yet with a sensitiveness that might cause her to wilt under adverse circumstances, and become downcast. This would appear from the incident where the Lord comes to raise Lazarus, for Mary remains in the house, apparently overcome with distress. Here it is Martha, of the God-fearing, kindly, yet blunt disposition who steps forth to express to the Lord the feelings animating both Mary and herself concerning their brother's death. "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died," at the same time expressing her belief in Christ as the Son of Deity, capable of performing anything he wished to do. Martha had an intelligent grasp of the Lord's teaching, and a firm faith in his claims as Israel's Messiah, and the Word informs us that the Lord loved Martha and her sister, and their brother Lazarus.

Is Mary, then, to be exalted above her sister Martha in all things. We think not. We find much to admire in both characters. The idea is to use discretion in building our spiritual house, while having at the same time to attend to duties necessary for our temporal existence as mortals. We are all Marthas and Marys, both in temperaments and occupations. Circumstances force some of us to be cumbered with much serving in the battle for existence, but the thing is not to let the duties of life be our sole thought, in that they cramp our spiritual outlook, causing us to serve the temporal more than is warranted. Of necessity, some have the hum-drum of Martha's duties, yet they become a solid support for their needs, and in their quiet way they can rise to the call of spiritually more favoured sisters, the Marys, who are often glad to lean on the faithful and practical Marthas.

Among the Marys are varying types, too. There are those who can live on an exalted plane of thought, but are lax in their temporal duties, thus showing that they have not attained to that nobility found in the true Marys and Marthas. A nobility which can, while walking in high places in Christ Jesus, stoop to minister in menial tasks, sharing the burden common to all, rightly dividing the word of

Truth by not going to extremes in either direction.

The Marthas and Marys can, and must, work together, for they are heirs together of life in its fulness and beauty. Let not Mary despise her sister Martha, because she appears cumbered about. Let not Martha be indignant if her sister Mary can indulge more than she. Let them both esteem one another as doing their duty in their several capacities, being humble in all things. While Mary leads, Martha follows on, strengthening the things that remain. Together they form a beautiful unit, fit to share together, the glory to be revealed.

H. Prosser.

The blending of the meditateness of Mary with the practicability of Martha is the ideal to attain. A richly stored mind to think, and an ever-ready power to act; a loving, tender, and sympathetic disposition, and a self-sacrificing, generous and practical service, these are the true ornaments of character of the woman professing godliness, whose home is the modern counterpart of the little home at Bethany.

Ruth



ENTLE, self-effacing Ruth! How strongly the example of her unselfish service underlines the lesson of faith and love. It has even coined a word in the English language, for to be ruthless is to lack the characteristics for which she is noted. Her appeal to Naomi: "Intreat me not to leave thee!" expressed the gentleness of her nature, whilst her determination to provide for them both, revealed the strength of her character. Her decision to stay with her mother-in-law was governed by love for her. She could not bear to see the older woman walk with sad, lonely steps back to poverty and perhaps despair; but she is too tactful to suggest Naomi has need of her. No, she expresses it the other way, as though as to be rejected by Naomi would put her at a disadvantage: "Intreat me not to leave thee."

Ruth was meek, not weak. She accepted the path of duty, and cheerfully walked where it led. For a time, it brought her into experiences of poverty and difficulty, but she was equal to them all. She had accepted the God of Israel as her God, not merely because it was Naomi's God, but because she was convinced that He should be worshipped. There was strength of purpose in her actions. She did not bewail the fact of her poverty, nor rave about what her rich relation should have done, nor claimed the right to public charity. She quietly sought out a service she could perform, and patiently toiled in the field to relieve the pressing need of both Naomi and herself. To use the figure of Boaz, when the storm of trouble broke over the little family in Moab, she trustingly crept under the shadow of Yahweh's wing, as a chicken crouches under the protecting wing of the mother-bird (Ch. 2:12). And out of weakness she was made strong.

Ruth did not presume on others. She manifested a noble spirit of independence. She resolved to obtain the necessities of life by working with her hands, in the one way that the law provided for such as were in her case. What motive dominated Ruth to accept these conditions? What caused her to willingly follow the reapers in the heat of the burning, Palestinian sun, laboriously gleaning the few grains they left? Had not she willingly served Yahweh?

Could He not move to alleviate her condition, and render unnecessary the back-breaking unaccustomed toil? She knew He could, and perhaps He would; but she patiently, in faith, accepted the conditions, waiting for Him to change them. She manifested a willingness to submit to what was required: "Not my will but Thine be done." This was her religion. She had accepted Yahweh as her God, and was prepared to accept the conditions.

Ruth's abounding love was such that she accepted an apparently hopeless future, the degradation of poverty, the disadvantages of a foreign country, the knowledge that the people of her adoption hated the people of her nativity, to cleave unto Naomi, and to serve Yahweh. Here is love of such a quality that only the words of Paul (1 Cor. 13) are adequate to express it. It was love expressed in action, not only to Naomi, not only to Boaz, but to Yahweh as well. She accepted the country, the hope, the religion of Israel. She turned her back completely and utterly upon Moab and all its ways, upon her father's house, upon the certainty of security in the land she knew so well, to embrace the strange customs, to learn the unaccustomed Law of the Israelites, to worship in such a form as to adversely reflect upon her native way of life.

Ruth was thus modest, industrious, meek, patient, and doubtless beautiful. She had the qualities to attract Boaz and engage his affection. Her tender solicitude for Naomi, her cheerful shouldering of the cares of the household, her voluntary acceptance of poverty, her patient endurance could not fail to arouse his esteem, as it did that of all Bethlehem. "All the city know that thou art a virtuous woman" said Boaz (Ch. 3:11). She appealed to him, and her character drew him to her. The same attributes in us will attract and please the Lord Jesus.

“Blessed Of The Father”



ISTERS who desire whole-heartedly and faithfully to “labour much in the Lord” will become possessed of the secret of wise and useful lives. They will diffuse joy and happiness to others, and “lay up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come.” Who are the blest?

*They who have kept their sympathies awake,
And scatter joy for more than conscience sake;
Steadfast and tender in the hour of need,
Gentle in thought, benevolent in deed;
Whose looks have power to make dissension cease,
Whose smiles are pleasant, and whose words are peace;
They who have lived as harmless as a dove,
Teachers of truth, and ministers of love.*

This is the ideal, poetically expressed, of every worthy sister who aspires to be among the “blessed of the Father” in the great joy of inspection. In endeavouring to reach unto it she will be ever watchful for her Lord, having her lamp well trimmed against the day of His coming. She will use her talents with diligence and care, and will carry out all her works of mercy and ministrations in the spirit of the Master’s words, “Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.”



Chapter Eight

Meditations

“Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” Let there be no talk of this standard being too high; this is the language of the unwise. We must rather accustom ourselves to the thought and the language of the Spirit, and labour to conform to that statute of the kingdom that requires us to “deny ungodliness, worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and Godly in this present world.”

Awake To Earnestness!



HERE are many who desire the resurrection of the wise, and, as Balaam, would like to be of the number; but who either gave themselves no trouble to attend to it, or are ignorant of the means of attainment, or will only labour for it according to their own suppositions or possibilities. These suppose everything but prove nothing. The blessedness of the resurrection is a laborious acquisition — a contention for the mastery over ourselves, and the world around us. This can only be attained by the “taught of God”, who understand His doctrine and yield the faithful and self-sacrificing obedience He requires. Then “labour to enter into his rest; for many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able”. They will be excluded from the Kingdom of God because they have not sought entrance into it in the appointed way. “Seek first the Kingdom of God,” saith the Great Teacher, “and His righteousness.” How highly important is this exhortation now, seeing that in a very short time the resurrection will have transpired, and no further invitation to inherit it be presented to the world. Ought we not, then, to awake to earnestness, and by rigid scrutiny of our faith and practice, obtain a scriptural satisfaction, if we shall be able to stand unabashed before the Judge of the living and the dead?

Bro. J. Thomas

Be Ye Holy



VERY true son and daughter of the Lord God Almighty is a miniature tabernacle or temple, as saith Paul, ‘Ye are the temple of the living God; if any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy.’ Our minds should be a holy place lined with gold of a tried faith, in which the one Christ-sacrifice for sins, is continually offered. The smoke of grateful incense, kindled by the fire of the altar, should be continually ascending. Deeply secreted in the innermost recess of our hearts and affections, as in the Ark in the

Most Holy, should be the law of God in remembrance, the desire to seek out its hid treasures in study and meditation, and an unabated zealous determination to hold the institutions of Divine appointment in continual reverence. Thus shall we be the sons of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, misunderstood by all, hated by many, despised and rejected of men, persevering in a bitter probation that will end at last, in life, and light, and joy everlasting. Then "The tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

An Object in Life



HERE is nothing so likely to help us to hold on in an earnest, loving manner, to the work of the truth, as the realizing in our own minds of an object in life. For what object do you live? Have you an object? Too many, it is to be feared, have no definite object in life beyond the whiling away of the passing hour; they are satisfied if they have succeeded by passing the day or the hour without being truly miserable, and such will tell you that they do so and so "to pass the time away." If such would only busy themselves in any useful direction with an earnest mind, they would find the time go too quickly with the greatest of ease. What result have those accomplished whose chief business in life is to while away the time? None! When the time is gone everything is gone, and there is nothing laid up in store against the day of reckoning.

J.R.

Sisters In The Ecclesia



IN writing to his son in the faith Timothy, concerning the purpose of his first Epistle, the Apostle Paul declared, "These things write I unto thee that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the ecclesia of the living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth." There is much in the Apostle's instruction of especial interest and importance to sisters.

In most ecclesias, sisters are numerically stronger than brethren, and this fact in itself emphasises the influence for good or ill which they exert. The Apostles frequently reminded Timothy of the power of example — "Take heed unto thyself." This precept, when applied to sisters in the ecclesia, is capable of the widest application. From the moment that each sister enters the "assembly of Called Out Ones," she becomes an example for good or bad to all her fellow-worshippers. A faithful sister will remember the gracious appeal of the Psalmist, "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness," and will endeavour to comply with this beautiful precept. Her mind will be suitably prepared to receive the impressions which collective worship affords. Quietness and thoughtfulness will characterize her demeanour before the commencement of the meeting. Close attention will be given to the spiritual ministrations of prayer, praise and exhortation. Meticulous care will be exercised to maintain the standard of holiness which becomes those who would worship the Father in "Spirit and in Truth." No worshipper at the weekly memorial feast will so far forget her call to holiness as to manifest unseemly behaviour of any kind in the presence of Christ. She will not attend to pay her vows clad in unbecoming or unsuitable attire. Her appearance will be modest, neat and undistracting to fellow-worshippers. With regard to hats, many women of the world have almost discarded this article of clothing. Even the leaders of religion have so far relaxed their rules as to permit women to attend Church services with their heads uncovered. No such innovation will mar the meetings of the brethren and sisters of Christ. Rather will sisters ensure that the hats they are wearing are really a covering. They prefer to approximate more closely

to Apostolic command, than to descend to the worldly fashions and customs of their more fleshly-minded contemporaries.

In imparting instruction concerning "good behaviour in the house of God", the Apostle includes exhortation and warning concerning speech. His words have particular reference to sisters. They must be "grave". No breath of slander must escape their lips, nor words of gossip or tittle-tattle be found on their tongues. Rather will the "assembly of the saints" be utilized for the furtherance of mutual spiritual interests. Many opportunities present themselves, for which wise sisters will be on the look-out. Visitors from other meetings can be given an affectionate welcome — newly immersed sisters imparted words of tenderness and love. The harassed and wearied can be buoyed up. Problems can be discussed with sisterly affection; arrangements can be made for the writing of letters, for the care of children, for the visiting of the sick, and sometimes invitations can be extended to troubled or lonely ones. These are golden opportunities which will not be missed by energetic and zealous workers in the service of Christ who desire to use the social intercourse available at the ecclesial meetings as a means of useful and edifying conversation.

An important duty in ecclesial life which may devolve upon sisters is the election of serving brethren. Their influence on these occasions can be very far-reaching, for their numerical strength may greatly affect the result of the ballots. It is imperative, in the interests of the Lord's work, that the divine commands relative to the elections of those who serve the ecclesia are fully comprehended and acted upon. No hesitation or doubt must be entertained, for the word of the Apostle to Timothy are emphatic on this point 1 Tim. 3:1-10. Before completing the Ecclesial ballot sisters should carefully study the necessary qualifications required by divine command, and after prayerful consideration decide, to the best of their knowledge, upon the suitability of each brother to be elected to office. Intelligent interest will also be taken in all ecclesial arrangements and affairs, and loyal co-operation and support given in the furthering of the Truth of God.

Sunday School Teaching



T is those who sincerely know and love the truth who are the best fitted to impart the spirit of the truth to others. Such interpret the scriptures, not as a mere book, but as the rule and inspiration of their own life. You do not merely work up a lesson, you must first live it, and know from experience that what you say is true. The foundation of good class work is in yourself; for your own work reflects your own personality. If you receive the message of the Bible as a living message from God, acting on your own daily life, then you will be able to bring it practically near to the children. Thereby not only will you impart that which you first receive through reading and absorbing the Word of God, but your own life will be brought into harmony with its teaching. The more it is read, the more it is loved; the oftener and the more closely we hold intercourse with it, the better men and women we become; and when it has saturated the brain with its wisdom, and is pouring into the veins its inspiration and hope, the truth will flow out of the teacher like rivers of living water.

H.C.L.

Too Tired Sunday Morning



I am too tired," "I prefer to hear the lecture," "Brother so-and-so is the speaker, and I never get any good from his addresses." These are not justifiable excuses for absence from the Breaking of Bread. Christ's command is this: "This do in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:24), and for us to ignore the command is to imperil our salvation.

Was ever a divine appointment set aside without incurring disastrous consequences to ourselves and God's displeasure towards us? Those who absent themselves from the Lord's Table should think of this. To refrain wilfully from assembling together on the first day of the week is not only to display a shocking lack of appreciation of the importance and profit of the appointment, but it is a direct insult to Christ.

A.T. J

*Wait on Yahweh, and keep His way, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land
(Psalm 37:34).*



The State of the Lamp

*Say, is thy lamp burning, my sister!
I pray thee look quickly and see;
For if it were burning, then surely
Some ray would fall brightly on me!*

*Though walking the road, yet I falter,
From the straight path I oft go astray;
I am weary, and faint, and disheartened —
Discouraged because of the way.*

*But if only thy lamp had burned brightly,
And showed what the road was to thee;
I, too, might have journeyed more rightly,
And found the road better for me.*

*There are many and many around thee
Needing sorely thy light's cheering glow:
If thou knew that they walked in the shadow,
Thy lamp would burn brighter, I know.*

*I think were it trimmed night and morning,
It would not so likely go out,
'Midst the fierce raging storms of temptation
Or the terrible tempest of doubt.*

*Oh, if all the lamps that are lighted,
Would steadily burn in a line:
What guidance for many benighted!
What a girdle of glory would shine!*



“Visiting The Sick”



HE visit of a true sister will turn to good account in those mutual visitations and rejoicings in the truth, which are natural among those of like precious faith. Such interchange of hope in the things promised, and shortly to be realized, will greatly quicken faith and courage in both visited and visitor. Specially will this be the case in visiting the sick and afflicted. The sister who knows experimentally the sweetness of the promises, both as regards His paternal care of us in this life, and of what He has in store for us in the future, can from the treasury of the Spirit created within her by the Word, follow the apostolic example of ministering the same comfort wherewith she herself is comforted of God. Where material help is needed, she will be ready, and if not sufficient of herself for the occasion, she will seek the co-operation of others like-minded, and be able to relieve the immediate wants of the afflicted. The poor among us we shall always have. Our Lord has told us so, perhaps to test our loyalty to him who deigns to acknowledge, that in every poor brother who is rich in faith, there is a representative of himself.

Sis. A. Hopkins

We must not keep our alabaster boxes of love and sympathy sealed up until our dear ones are gone, but fill their lives with sweetness. Cheering and helping them by our words and actions. The things we mean to do and say, let us do them now. Let us brighten their homes with the sweet flowers we might place upon their graves. Many an alabaster box full of the fragrant perfume of affection and tenderness has never been broken till the one we intended to anoint has passed beyond recalling, without having tasted the sweetness of human sympathy, or their wearied senses being refreshed by the fragrant flowers of kindness.

Go, Tell The Others



HERE was a moment when a deeply grief-stricken woman was wandering about in the half-light or dawn looking for the body of the man she loved. The things that she had witnessed done to him had been bad enough, but now to her tortured mind it seemed that his body was not allowed to rest in peace. Suddenly a voice spoke to her, "Mary." Oh the joy, the intense relief there is in her one cry of response, "Rabboni" She knew that voice, as she knew no other! So here we see the first instructions given in a new era — and they were given to a woman! "Go, tell the others." How her feet would fly to meet the others, and how breathlessly she would give them the news! No matter that they only half believed. She knew! She had been the first to see the Lord alive! What a wonderful privilege Mary was given. How she would talk, and talk, and talk to everyone who would listen! There are listening ears around us today. Do we talk to them? We have been privileged to have Him speak to us, and to call us out from the world to become His sisters. Should not sisters, then, make the most of their opportunity, and "go and tell?"

E.G.

What do we do, each of us, if "one asketh us a reason concerning the hope that is in us". Do we say, "I will bring you a leaflet about that"? Do we say, "I should like you to meet Brother Dot or Sister Dash, who know a lot more about this than I do"? Do we simply change the subject? Or do we tell them?

“Pleasure”



THE fascinations of the present evil world are usually powerful with the weaker sex. There is a present relish about them which pleases the inexperienced mind. Those who have learnt to be wise will let them pass. They are pleasures too short for those who long for immortality, and too dearly bought when enjoyed at the risk of God's displeasure and our own hurt. The danger is greater than the simple know. It is not the immediate effect of an individual act of participation in the world's pleasures that is to be considered; it is what it may easily lead to in associations formed, and the fostering of an inferior taste to the weakening of such as the truth creates within us.

Then there is that social rivalry which still more easily draws even wise women into its coils, in which the foolish votaries of fashion put themselves to immense trouble to commend themselves to their equally-foolish contemporaries. This is great vanity, the victims of which at last get wearied and disgusted. For one professing godliness to get entrapped in this mistake, (living in the world and of the world), is sadder than the case of even an out-and-out worldling, who, at least, never having aspired to a crown of immortality, does not lose it. Far rather not to embrace the glad tidings of the kingdom, and not to rejoice in the prospect of that untold goodness of God, and set oneself to the attainment thereof, than for a woman to lay hold on these things, and engraft upon them "the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life."

We are required, while the Lord is away, to honour him by a faithful compliance with all his commandments, whether spoken by his own lips or delivered by his servants, whom he commissioned to speak for him; and we cannot expect to attain this faithfulness, otherwise than by the constant study and remembrance of these things.

This brings to mind again the thought that, apart from the daily study of the Word, there is little chance of success. How, otherwise, in the absence of voice and sign, are we to continue in harmony with the expressed mind of our Master who is in heaven? Familiar acquaintance with the Word enables us to realise that it is not according to His will

that we should coquette with the world, or keep it secret that we are espoused to him; neither is it his will, when we have withdrawn from the world, that we should plan how nearly we may conform to its foolish and faithless ways, and yet retain His favour. He desires that abundant love which He has shown for us, and which should constrain us readily and lovingly to be content to be as He was in this evil world. We may have Him continually before us in memory as our pattern; the example which we shall be alone safe to follow.

No one who knows the truth, can flatter a world which is ignorant, unbelieving and disobedient, and be guiltless before God.

Dr. Thomas

Thoroughness in All Things



OD requires from His children an all-round obedience. All His commands are equally binding. There is to be no picking and choosing, no carefulness in one direction, and carelessness in another. There must be a genuine endeavour to fulfil God's will in ways disagreeable as well as agreeable. Covetousness has to be eschewed, but evil speaking quite as much so. We have to be honest, but also chaste. Let us take care lest our good points blind our eyes to our bad ones. We are not safe, not acceptable to Christ, unless we show a general all-round thoroughness, avoiding exceptions and reservations. This thought will bear unlimited amplification. To take one or two illustrations. No amount of zeal and activity in the public proclamation of the Truth will exempt us from the obliga-

tion of enlightening and rearing our own children in the fear of God. No amount of warm love and amiability towards the brethren at the meetings will excuse coldness and churlishness with our own kith and kin at home. No amount of time spent at committee meetings will justify neglect of our daily readings. God's law is very searching; it leaves no corner of our mental nature untouched. It takes away all ground for spiritual swagger. Great is the man who can discern his own weaknesses, and has pluck enough to grapple with them.

A.T.J.

With the anointing of the Lord's head and feet by Mary, John records "the house was filled with the odour of the ointment". Faithful and loving service will have this effect any time. Let a sister figuratively perform similar service in Christ's Name, and the odour of the action will fill the ecclesial house.

Meekness



MEEKNESS is a name given to those dispositions, natural or acquired, which are opposed to undue violence, wrath and revenge. It implies whatever is serene, quiet and peaceful, in opposition to what is irritable, turbulent and vindictive. Its appropriate signs are endurance, forbearance, gentleness in the midst of provocations, calmness of words and actions, where all around is contention and anger, acquiescence in unmerited injuries without insisting on satisfaction, and a preference of the least offensive motives of gaining redress where to seek it is felt to be a duty. A disinclination to the indulgence of any feelings but those of tenderness, goodwill, and kindness; a uniform evenness and stillness of temper, a strong desire of being at peace, and avoiding offence so far as possible, these indicate the virtue of meekness.

Control That Temper



PEOPLE of violent temper sometimes console themselves with the thought that it is soon over, and then they are alright. That may be as regards how they feel themselves. But what about others? Wounds are made that do not easily heal and love is checked that does not easily revive. Stand over "temper" as your worst enemy. When you feel it stirring, run away, or at least be silent. Solomon well says: "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls."

Sin, like a river, begins in a quiet spring, but ends in a tumultuous sea.

Bear With Each Other



WE are all moving on a great march, a vaster assembly than ever moved through the wilderness of old, and when we stand revealed to Him, and He to us, and we to each other, we shall look back with unspeakable sorrow at the jars, and the discords, and the uncharities of this mortal life; and for every sweet kindness, for every loving helpfulness, for every patience, and for every self-denial or self-sacrifice, we shall lift up thanks to Almighty God.

R.R.

Trials Of Ecclesial Life



YOU are troubled at the un-Christlike ways of some in your meeting. You thought, when first you came among the Christadelphians, that everyone would be exemplary, gentle, kind, upright, pure. It is not strange, dear sister, that you should think thus. You have our sympathy. But do not be downcast. There is no real ground for disappointment. You have left some things out of account. You must not forget that the ecclesias as at present constituted are not the Kingdom, but merely a collection of imperfect men and women, in a state of preparation for it, and that many of these, according to divine intimation, are destined to turn out unworthy, abortions, styled by Paul mere wood, hay, stubble and earth (1 Cor. 3:12; 2 Tim. 2:20). Reflect upon ecclesial life in the light of this revelation, and your surprise will cease. Remember that many in the brotherhood have only just started on the road of well-doing. To expect from such the ability and spirituality of an aged Paul is not reasonable. But you say that there are some who have been on the road for a long time who are far from satisfactory. True, if it were not so something would be wrong, the Scriptures would not be fulfilled. The brethren also would be lacking in opportunities for the display of patience and long-suffering, as divinely enjoyed. If there were not the unruly, the feeble minded, and the weak in our midst, what scope would there be for carrying out such a duty as that referred to in 1 Thess. 5:14? Think again upon the subject, and you will see that the situation of which you complain is inevitable, that it is nothing more than what the Scriptures lead us to expect. Ecclesial life, more or less, is one of trial, and will continue so to be until Christ shall come. The experience, however, will end, and that gloriously for all who remain "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

Speech



ONCERNING speech, the Scriptures say much, and no marvel, for speech may be regarded as a sure index to character. If we wish to know the bent of a person's tastes and thoughts, we have but to await the opening of his lips. The philanthropist talks of his plans and schemes for benefiting humanity; the pleasure seeker converses of places of amusement and sightseeing, the egotist discourses about himself, the righteous "speaketh wisdom and his tongue talketh of judgment." Truly "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." We profess to be righteous: does our speech answer to the Divine description? If the Truth occupies the supreme place in our affections, we shall be constrained to speak of it. If we allow the things of the present to absorb our interest, then our conversation will be of the people, places, and things of the world, of eating, drinking, and apparel, but of the high and lofty things of God it will be barren. The scriptures lay down no greater test of saintship than the use to which we put the gift of speech: "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

C. H. J

Effective singing is a great accessory to a spiritual assembly. It elevates the mind in its endeavours to realise the great things of the Spirit. There was splendid music in the temple; splendid music among the angels who announced the birth of Christ. There will be splendid music among "the redeemed of the Lord when they come with singing unto Zion;" Let us therefore make earnest and likewise endeavours now in connection with our cherishment of "the blessed hope."

R.R.

The Talebearer



H! the unkindness of some. They will search out, magnify, and publish to the four quarters of the globe the failings of their neighbours; but for their neighbours' good traits they have no eyes, no ears, no tongues. Why this unkindness? It may arise from envy, or spite, or the mere love of scandal. But whatever the cause, the practice is utterly wrong, for God has forbidden it. "Speak not evil one of another." "Thou shalt not go up and sow as a talebearer among thy people." It is wrong, for it is thoughtless and cruel. Have we not all failings? Is it not, as a rule, calling the kettle black? Who would wish their own weaknesses to be advertised to the world? Let those who are given to the pernicious habit of scandalising cease, for if persisted in it will unquestionably imperil our salvation.

A.T.J.

There is nothing more stringently forbidden by the law of God, nothing more blighting to friendship, and nothing more common among men than back-biting, speaking evil of people behind their backs.

R.R.

Words That Encourage Or Destroy



WORDS, like fire, require wise management to keep their usefulness from turning to destructiveness. To repress a harsh answer, to confess a fault, and to stop in the midst of self-defence, are three golden threads with which domestic happiness is woven. Harmony will take the place of discord where self-restraint in words is practised. "A soft answer turneth away wrath." We are exhorted to "confess our faults one to another." God will be our defender if we are in the right in the use of words. Our Master's example should be a source of strength. "He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth."

Words

*Keep a watch on your words, dear sisters,
For words are wonderful things,
They are sweet like the bees' fresh honey,
Like the bees they have terrible stings.*

*They can bless like the warm, glad sunshine,
And brighten a lonely life;
They can cut in the strife of anger,
Like a cruel two-edged knife.*

*Keep them back if they are cold and cruel,
Under bar, lock and seal;
For the wounds they make my sisters,
Are always slow to heal.*

*May peace guard your lips for ever,
From the time of your early youth,
May the words that you daily utter,
Be only the words of love and truth.*



The Inner Man



THE character we are required to form that we may realize the "one hope of our calling" must be inspired by the Truth. That is, the Law of the Lord must dwell in us, with the courageous determination to obey it, or live in conformity to it, and to contend earnestly for it. At all hazards, God must be in all our thoughts, and our actions must be shaped with a view to His approbation alone. How will this or that be approved by our Father in Heaven, and not what will the people or their leaders say, should be the only question permitted to stand up between our conceptions and the practice of them. In short, "the grace of God that bringeth salvation" teaches us that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and Godly in the present world; looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works;" it charges "them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on to Eternal Life." Such are the things which constitute the character of the man whose religion is pure and undefiled, and who will be accepted when the Day Star shall illumine the world.

Bro. J. Thomas.

Chapter Nine

Overcoming Tribulation

It is into the green pastures and beside the still waters that the Shepherd Divine leads His flock. Often from the mountain-top of life's experience we must be led into the lowly places, and there it is, among the humbler surroundings and the sweet fragrant stillness, that we learn the deeper and richer lessons of the valleys.

"In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be your strength," says the Spirit in the prophet, and we well know that it is the still waters, that reflect the beauty of all surrounding objects, as well as the light of heaven, and the glory of the Sun and Moon. So it is the quiet soul that exercises the most influence on others, and the greatest works are accomplished in our quiet moments. Let us then cultivate stillness of mind and prayerful meditation, for it is also testified "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." (Isa. 26:3).

"This is my comfort in my affliction That thy promise gives me life"

Psalm 119:50.

Rejoice in the Lord Always *(Phil. 4:4)*



DIFFICULTIES will beset our path, for there are none without. It would be just as unlikely to find a person without a shadow in the sunshine as to find one individual in the world without trials and difficulties. But neither grief nor losses should be allowed to interfere with our duty to God and our neighbour. Even in the valley of the shadow of death we must not sorrow as those who have no hope. Let us, rejoicing in the mercy and trusting in the goodness of Him who doeth all things well, and changes not, build ourselves up for those important duties. Those solemn obligations, those larger responsibilities which open out to every enlightened believer's mind, through prayer and study of the one and only Book which is calculated to impart true comfort and courage to the heart, and which embraces all the heights and depth of human nature.

This Holy Book goes down to the very roots of our bitterest needs and our darkest sorrows. It speaks in accents that are divine about the only things that are of real importance at last to all, for the Bible belongs to those elemental things, like bread and wine, like the sky and the ocean, like the kisses of little children, and tears shed at the grave side, which can never grow stale or obsolete, or out of date, because they are the common heritage of mankind. If we are guided by the counsel of God, we shall stimulate all those noble feelings and aspirations befitting those in Christ and put them to good account, and use them for the noblest and most enduring end.

Sis. A. Hopkins

Be Prepared For Trial



LIVEN in this life a trusting, loving service, while health and strength and means are at our disposal, lays up a good foundation against the time to come. The consciousness of pursuing a dutiful line of conduct gives the answer of a good conscience, and tranquilizes the mind, where otherwise fear and apprehension might take possession and distract the thoughts. We have no assurance that we shall escape trouble. Indeed, we may make up our minds that we shall be tried, for in the trial of our faith and patience are we to be perfected; but then as dutiful and confiding children, how different is our position when trials do come, than if we were of those who are without God and without hope in the world; of those, who, having a name to live, are dead; and who until aroused by some unexpected calamity, do not realise the glorious position to which the Truth has introduced them.

The daughter of the Almighty who has made His acquaintance by giving heed to His testimonies, making their study and meditation her delight, will be much better able to meet calamity than her sisters, who allow domestic, or any considerations to rob them of this true wealth. It matters not, after all, how much we are called upon to bear, if only we can be supported in it. Let us then in health and when things go with tolerable smoothness keep close acquaintance with God. Great sorrows He may permit to overtake us, even as He spared not His own Son; but His favour is sufficient to sustain us, and raise us up when greatly bowed down.

Jane Roberts

Life seems to be made up of peaks and shadows. Moments of high resolve or courageous action, are often followed by fits of depression and weakness that bring one to the brink of despair. Only by setting the mind completely upon the purpose of God in Christ, or acknowledging at all times that we serve Him and not ourselves, will we be saved from the depression of our own passions.

“My Grace Is Sufficient For Thee”



OUR present life in the Truth is a time of probation or proving. We have to work out our salvation with trembling and fear. God has provided the salvation for which we are looking, but He has imposed the condition that we must seek for it by a patient continuance in well-doing.

We have then to plod on with the tasks God has given us even if they may sometimes be irksome and even though we may become weary. The tired man can urge himself forward. The weariness that sometimes comes upon the saint is one of his trials and, if he plods on in spite of it, it will in time pass. As one of Solomon's proverbs says, "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." Our own strength may be very small, but we should know that it is one of our privileges to cry unto the Strong One for strength, and that our prayer will not go unanswered. There is also what may be described as the passive aspect of endurance. Sometimes trouble comes upon us which we cannot remove for ourselves and which God may not remove even in response to our prayers. All that we can then do is to bear our troubles with resignation and fortitude as part of God's discipline. We have one example of this sort of suffering in Paul's "thorn in the flesh." The account shows us that he did suffer severely, under his affliction, but his earnest three-fold request for its removal was not granted. He did, however, receive the consoling words, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Any saint under such affliction can dwell on the promise that God will never leave nor forsake those who put their trust in Him.

C.H.G.

Although our lot is changing, yet we are not left as a piece of driftwood, tossed by the waves and borne by the currents anywhere. God orders our lives for some beneficent end, of mercy and love. We must remember our calling and live in it, making the most of it. We must be content to fill a little place if it is our proper place, and do all the good we can; but let us be sure that it is our place, so that we do not hide our light under a bushel, thinking we were never intended to shine. How many of God's children, endowed with His richest gifts and blessings are content to bury them in the dust of cowardice and unbelief, and waste all their precious opportunities.

The Wonder of Forgiveness



ANY times in the old testament the wonder of God's forgiveness is set forth. "Thou hast cast all my sins behind my back", Hezekiah wrote after his recovery (Isa. 38:17). There is awe at the ways of God in the cry of Micah: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:18-19). The Psalmist declares the graciousness of God in unforgettable words: "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him" (Psa. 103:8-12).

There is no good to be done by giving in to failure. Some fall and incline to lie where they fall. This is a mistake. Let them get up and try again. We do not stand where Adam stood. One offence brought ruin to him; he had no High Priest; we have, and we are invited to make confession of our failures and trespasses and try again.

Robert Roberts

Our Hearts Desire



IN your several spheres of probation, you are yearning for the glory to be revealed. You hunger and thirst for the prevalence of a noble enlightenment among men. You love God yourselves with all your hearts and souls. You long to see others rejoice in Him and exalt Him in a sincere and intelligent way. You have a compassionate regard for the condition of mankind, and desire, with even a tearful earnestness, to see them in a blessed condition. You sigh and faint for the delights of sanctified and intellectual friendship, in which the hearts of companions should open with a noble warmth, to the great and noble topics that the universe presents to the mind, instead of gravitating heavily to the petty accidents of animal life. Ah, and you are afflicted with your own incapacities that blur the sight and enfeeble the hands, and drag you into abysses of gloom as dark and dreadful as Jonah's habitation in the storm-tossed sea. Now, there is comfort concerning all this. It is true, and true comfort wears well, whereas false comfort fails you in the long run. The comfort is that these things are unattainable in the present condition of human life upon earth, but that they are attainable and will be realised in their very perfection in the Kingdom of God. The recognition of this is a help. We reconcile ourselves hopefully to our lot, enduring the hardness of the desert by knowing that it is desert, and in the confident anticipation of the land of promise at the end of the journey. One comfort more. It is not displeasing to the Father that we thus hunger and thirst to the point even of misery, after righteousness. On the contrary, Jesus said, "Blessed are ye that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for ye shall be filled."

Robert Roberts

You must make up your mind that the world around you will never be what it ought to be until made such by God's own powerful hand of judgment. Therefore endure the desolation, but beware of the effects of contact with it. Do not conform except in trifles. Conquer your environment; let not your environment conquer you. What is this but "overcoming the world" upon which our acceptability with Christ at last depends.

"Whom the Lord Loveth He Chasteneth"



OD puts his children in the furnace to try them, as gold, that the dross may be consumed. No character is complete till it is tried. A man or woman is worth little as a companion, either for wisdom or sympathy, who has not seen trouble. Those believers, "living in pleasure are dead while they live." Having a name to live, they are dead; they are not awake to the great and dread realities of existence that are in God. If God love, He will draw them into the furnace in some way. This is the word of Christ to the seven ecclesias. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten" (Rev. 3:19). Again, "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? It cannot be that this principle should apply to the sons of God in the first century, and not apply now. God changeth not; and if we are His, we are as much the objects of his care as His children were in the beginning. Therefore when we suffer according to the will of God, let us commit ourselves unto Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator (1 Pet. 4:19).

Suffering is a heavy plough, driven by a hand of iron. The more ungrateful and rebellious the soil, the more it tears; the richer and softer the soil, the deeper it delves.

Walking With God Trusting In God



OD knows the path of life we are treading. "We walk by faith and not by sight," for we cannot tell what a step may bring forth. We are like the Alpine traveller; through ravine and rock and forest we tread our way, now coming to a narrow ledge with the steep below us, and now to the flowery vale. Without God's upholding power unseen, we should stumble, and plunge ourselves into death. We must keep our eyes on the summit, and not look down; we must set our "affections on things above." Sometimes it is the treacherous mire of difficulty that obstructs our road; we do not know what to do for the best, but we set our feet firm on the stepping stones that break it, and get over the cares and toils that fret us, and would work our ruin. Sometimes the white mists of sorrow veil the glory of the future and blight over present hopes like the radiant landscape that disappears as the mists fall around them; but still though hidden, God has not left us, and soon the sun shines out again with hopes of the brighter morrow, and floods our path with light — a glorious foretaste of that which shall crown our pathway in the Kingdom, when we shall, if found worthy, receive "the white pebble" (Rev. 2:17). To walk successfully along the rugged and oft stony path of life we must "walk circumspectly" avoiding evil and surmounting obstacles, and precisely as yonder tabby-cat is seen picking her way cautiously over the top of the broken glass on the stone wall. How carefully she moves along without the least slip — the soft padded paws receiving no hurt! She looks ahead and treads circumspectly. It is an homely object lesson enacted before our eyes, the import of which we must not miss. While "the wicked know not at what they stumble," the righteous are bold as a lion. They tread firmly and cautiously and thus succeed.

Sis. A. Hopkins

Isolation



LET us not forget our brethren and sisters in isolation. Let us comfort and encourage them when we are able with a letter or printed matter announcing our lectures and ecclesial proceedings. This is a duty, which, if faithfully performed will certainly relate us to the blessing of Matt. 25:40. Those in isolation are much to be pitied. Their position is fraught with exceptional temptations. How great these are, only those can tell who have been cut off from the support and stimulus of the meetings. As to those in isolation, let them not neglect the Divine antidote to the dangers of their situation. The safeguard is reading — earnest and incessant reading of the Scriptures, and the writings of those who have understood and loved them. Much effort will often be needed to create and maintain a habit in this direction, but a recognition of its necessity will give the incentive. If this counsel is heeded, there will be no going astray, even though in isolation — not letting slip the great things of God. If it is disregarded, then laxity is sure to set in, as the experience of many has shown. The reading of the Scriptures and the writings referred to will, in a sense, provide the lonely with company, excellent company. It will bring them within the all powerful influence of the great Unseen God, and it will also bring them within the homely and cheering influence of the brethren, although separated from them by thousands of miles or by death. Let those in isolation regard it not only as wise but imperative to provide for themselves the works of Dr. Thomas and Brother Roberts, and other faithful brethren.

Whether ye be man or woman, you will never do anything in the world without courage, "Be strong and courageous."

Logos Vol. 1.

The Lonely Cry

*When sorrows deep our trembling hearts ensnare,
When friends have fled, aband'ning us to care,
All human conflict gone and we're alone,
Oh Heavenly Father hear our spirit's groan.*

*What heart can feel our soul's lone misery?
No arms outstretched to comfort tenderly,
Pour out Thy grace when cries the anguished soul
May Gilead's balm heal us, and make us whole.*

*Storm rages stronger, dark the night ahead
Alone Thy Presence soothes our troubled head,
Grant to thy lambs the solace Thou can'st give
Cleanse painful hearts, and O dear Lord, forgive.*

*Thy Son thou gavest in Thy wondrous love,
Now may we rest, assured that from above
Compassion still in endless steam will flow,
When sad in heart, may we Thy mercy know.*

*Friends may forsake us, eyes grow dim with tears,
Why do we fear? Thou casteth out all fears,
Man's love may wane, but changeless Lord thou art,
O Saviour hear, and heal the broken heart.*

Sis. B. Flint.



Sisters in Business



MOST unmarried sisters, are engaged to-day in business life in an office, shop, factory, farm or hospital. How should they comport themselves? The world they have to face is the product of the carnal mind, which says Paul, "is not subject to the Law of God." Its evil ways are exhibited in the behaviour, speech and attire of many women in business, whose general attitude is comparable to that of the "daughters of Zion." They were "haughty, and walked with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes," and the daughters of the Gentiles today are no better.

Into such unholy society, many sisters of Christ necessarily venture forth to earn a living. In so doing they shoulder a very great responsibility, for they go as sheep among wolves, as light-bearers to a dark and degenerate people, as sisters of Christ amidst the children of this world. Many have been "brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" from early days. Can they now stand the test? Others, in years of maturity, have renounced the "hidden things of dishonesty" in favour of the purity and peace of the gospel. Can they maintain their integrity? All must remember that they are not their own they have been purchased with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, and He demands their unswerving loyalty and devotion.

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" This is the frame of mind to adopt as the guiding principle in pursuing the daily vocation. It provides a strong antidote to the encroachment of worldly pleasures, and a powerful incentive to the cultivation of a Christ-like disposition. It induces an earnest and thoughtful demeanour, a quiet and modest deportment, and a holy and contrite spirit, such as was displayed by the Lord Himself.

Such beautiful characteristics will find expression in many practical ways. The sister of Christ will be sincere, conscientious and sober-minded. She will avoid the flippancy and instability of her feminine associates, among whom she will be held in respect, though not in favour. She will refrain from the "small talk" and foolish gossip of the more empty-headed of her contemporaries, and still more,

from the back-biting and slandering in which they indulge. These hurtful activities taint human society everywhere, and provide ample reason why the sister of Christ would keep separate from the world, in obedience to Apostolic command. (2 Cor. 6:17). Her general deportment will be such that her work-fellows will "take knowledge that she has been with Jesus." She will not be haughty, nor disdainful, nor self-assertive. By no means will she be fast, or common. Instead, she will be modest, to the point of reserve, almost too much so for the liking of her more pushful colleagues. Always courteous, she will never be rude or arrogant; ever ready to help, but never a busy-body. Her great aim will be to manifest the "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24).

An extremely grave temptation to which a sister in business is frequently exposed, concerns the attitude towards her by members of the opposite sex. A young and pleasant sister will almost certainly find that before long she is the object of the attentions of one or more of the men folk with whom she must necessarily mingle during the day. Friendly relations may be attempted which appear harmless and innocent enough. These probably take the form of an invitation to lunch, or a stroll after business. Friendship-seekers such as these may even profess to take an interest in religion, especially if a sister's devout mode of life has been the subject of particular notice. The warning note of Scripture is explicit on this point. "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." (Prov. 4:14). Consistent efforts to maintain this divine standard of purity of life will imbue the mind with wisdom and discernment. In the keeping of these holy precepts lies each sister's highest good.

If, as a result of a sister's sincere demeanour, a genuine interest is shown in her religious beliefs by a male member of the staff, she can always introduce the enquirer to a brother of standing, who would be pleased to instruct him in the "way of life more perfectly."

In whatever capacity a sister of Christ is daily engaged, she will not allow the demands of business to absorb too much of her time or talent. There is need for balanced judgment in this connection. Called to "be a good steward of the manifold grace of God," a wise sister will reserve

some part of the day for reading, meditation and prayer, for this is vital to the development of spiritual health and vigour. Opportunities of service can be "bought up." Good stewardship comprises a lifelong accumulation of little acts, humbly and willingly performed — a letter of comfort and cheer written during the lunch-hour a young or lonely sister befriended on or from her way to work — the sick visited, or a visiting sister given a welcome at the station. Quite often, in her leisure time, the sister who types can do much useful work. Exhortations, addresses, letters, extracts from the writings of the brethren; these can be duplicated and circulated among sisters in isolation. And how strengthened are these lonely watchers as a result of such industry and effort!

The wise planning of the weekly earnings must also be considered, so that some part, however small, can be devoted to the Truth's interests. The greater the sacrifice entailed in thus providing a reserve, the more precious the gift in the sight of Christ.

All these little duties and services, faithfully discharged, provide limitless opportunities for combining daily business affairs with the immeasurably higher Business of the Father. They constitute in the aggregate the answer to the question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" "If ye love me, keep my commandments." They are comprehensive in their survey, and rigid in their application. They cover every situation in which sisters in business may find themselves, and provide a rule of action which will guide them through trials and temptations, to lives of usefulness and happiness. Strong in courage and in faith, they will carry out their daily tasks with earnestness and zeal, "in singleness of heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men pleasers, but as the servant of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart — knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord." (Eph. 6:5-8).

Virginia Vigilant

Widows



HERE is a serious place for the widows in the Ecclesia also. The comforting in the time of loss and distress is the work of the other members of the Ecclesia. But when the widow has regained strength through those ministrations of love, there comes a time when she, too, can take her place and continue the work. The older sisters, with a wealth of experience in all the facets of life behind them, can give a tremendous amount of valuable help to the ecclesia. She can give counsel to the young. She can love the little ones. She can keep busy in many small ways, quietly and unobtrusively, without becoming a "busy-body." Showing her courage and faith before her neighbours will be, perhaps her first unconscious work. Then she can use her own personal talents to the best of her ability, with no other distractions to take her mind. She can take more time to study, and prepare her mind so that her counsel will be sound and just. The place in the ecclesia for the widow is one of dignity and respect, but above all, she will exhibit love and consideration for others, her experience has taught her as no other can.

E.G.

The Scriptures are full of the accounts of righteous women who performed quite spectacular tasks, as well as quiet, unassuming women, and all were in the plan and purpose of God. Without them there would have been a great deal lacking.

Young Sisters



O the young sister, who has been so fortunate as to receive the Truth in the morning of life, it will be of the very highest importance that she begin at once to equip herself for the good fight of faith. Upon no arm of flesh must she entirely lean. She has entered upon a course of trial, though, at the first it will not, probably, appear so to her. She has just received the Truth with much gladness. All appears joyous and bright, and her only desire is that the Lord would come and permit her to realize the glowing visions of which she reads, when the saints will take the Kingdom and reign with Christ upon earth. This time will come, and is longed for by every son and daughter of the Lord Almighty, but the young sister must remember that this honour is reserved for saints. Her saintship will have to be developed by her obedience in the Truth, and it will all depend upon her faithfulness to him who has called her to be a saint, whether in the day of judgment she will pass into the ranks of that honourable company or not.

She will not have gone far in the straight and narrow way before her difficulties begin. It is designed by God for every one adopted into His family that they shall be tried. His people are to be prepared people, like polished stones, like gold tried in the fire. As years advance, cares and responsibilities and troubles increase, and the young sister must not think that she will prove any exception to the rule. If she be a faithful sister, she will not. In whatever position in life she may be placed, she can labour for Christ, and she can suffer for his sake. His will and desire concerning her is that she should do so, and continue to do so till he calls her to the high destiny he has promised. His words are, "Who-soever taketh not up his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." The taking up of the cross would imply a voluntary act, not merely the enduring of something inevitable; but the deliberately doing of something that will bring endurance in some shape or form, and that for Christ's sake. Each particular condition of life will present opportunities for this cross-bearing.

J. Roberts

Comfort In Tribulation



LET us look neither to the right hand nor the left, but be diligent to make our calling and election sure. If we are striving (agonising, as translators tell us it ought to be) to realise a joyful standing in that day, we have reason to be of good cheer, though sorrowing because of the manifold temptations which for a season surround us. The world weeps and laments when its sorrows come, for it has no hope; but the daughter of Sarah, while wetting the pillow with her tears, sorrows not as these. The Truth is to her a healing balm even now. The afflicting visitations of this time of sojourn destroys her not; she accepts them as the incidents of her pilgrimage.

Unknown to her contemporaries, who would think her crazy if she told them what she looks for, she is one of a band who shared the same fate before her; Godly women, daughters of Sarah, all who have faithfully testified to the Truth, by word and deed, in their day and generation. Denied the company of the faithful now, she takes comfort in knowing that there will shortly be an end to her travail, in the day when those who have hungered and thirsted after righteousness shall be filled; and when all the nobler faculties of her nature, feeble and abortive now, will be made perfect in change from flesh to Spirit.

J. Roberts

Although it is through much tribulation that the righteous will enter the kingdom yet they can rest on the sure foundation of God's promise: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

Encouragement From A Faithful Sister



Y Dear Brother,

The good confession you have made must have rejoiced many of like precious faith; and having passed through much of the same discipline before I was begotten by the Word of Truth. I desire most earnestly through the weak effort of my pen, but in the strength of the Word of the Lord, to assist you, that with a firmer grasp you may lay hold of the hope set before you.

To know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom the Father hath sent, is indeed life eternal; but like children we must begin with the letter A, before we learn correctly to articulate the word "shibboleth." One letter wrong in the mystery of the "Name" will hinder our progress, and no doubt prevent our entrance into life; therefore let Moses and the prophets be our cloud by day, Jesus and the apostles our pillar of fire by night. Let the two lips of God speak aloud to us, for the one alone cannot make a perfect sound, and as you progress by adding to your faith, "knowledge," you will always find the beautiful shadow of the law and testimony will never fail to reflect the exact outline of the glorious substance, which Paul says is the Christ. You cannot conceive the rich mine you have found, but the treasure lies buried, wrapped together in a clean place by itself, and laid there by the Eternal Spirit's own hands, and if you say, where is it laid? Truth will whisper, Come and see; but only the Truth will reveal the hiding place, and when you have found the pearl which is hid in the gospel of the Kingdom, you will indeed sell all, that you may retain it. Wisdom has counted its cost, but tells us its value cannot be estimated. We may buy the Truth, says the Word, but never sell it; Wisdom's holy ones hold it too dear to part with it. To them it is most gloriously precious; continually they are heard to sing aloud "Thy ways are ways of pleasantness, and all thy paths are peace." For step by step, Wisdom lifts her children, and although her footprints are only here a little and there a little, still are they deepened by the first tread of the Eternal Spirit's mysterious outline, which nothing can efface. And as we follow on to know the Lord, we indeed grasp a doctrine, which Jesus said, "is not

mine, but His that sent me." We must be taught of God before we can come to Christ, for the knowledge of the Father can alone draw us to Him. Therefore, let us "give attendance to reading," that we may understand what God at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, and in the last day of the Jewish dispensation He hath spoken by His Son. Let the ear of our understanding catch every sound, that we may be able to comprehend the manifold wisdom of God; the leaven of the Word must be hid, and the warm atmosphere of faith and hope must surround it, before the rising process can leaven the whole lump.

My brother, you have left the land of darkness, and have crossed the Red Sea of Baptism, and have learnt the sweet song of Moses; but a great wilderness is before you, it is called the wilderness of sin. But here the Lord our God will prove you as He did Israel of old; here He will try you as silver is tried, and refine you as gold is refined; You have to pass through the enemy's land, for the promised rest is beyond, and although you may pitch your tent a little season to rest, your march will bring the enemy near, but while our Forerunner tarries in the mountain of holiness, let us not make an image of our own imagination and worship it, but let us be satisfied with the pattern given. Let us not, when thirsty, strike the rock of Truth with the rod of error, but like little children in meekness, let us call forth its sweet waters as the Lord our God has commanded. Let us never forget to place our rod before the mercy seat at eventide, and in the morning, we shall find it has budded and borne fruit, for there the Lord our God has promised to talk with us; let us not listen to the evil report of the land, but let us be satisfied with the rich grapes of Yahweh's promises borne as they have been on the shoulders of the Prophets, Christ and the Apostles; and when our footsteps mark the promised land, Truth with her faithful finger will point out the lot of our inheritance.

I feel deeply interested in your welfare, because, as I said before, I have passed through much that you have been the subject of. In the year 1848, I sat under Baptist Noel for a short season. I was living at that time in a business house in Newgate Street, and although the distance was long, thought nothing of it, because I was deeply interested in his preaching. My marriage brought me to

America, and in this land, the Truth found me. I was like yourself, a wanderer, seeking for something, but knew not then what it was. Intense grief would come over me, when I opened the Word, because I could not understand it. I left off going to church, and made up my mind I would embrace nothing, until I could find something like I read in the Word: not an ism, but my thirsty soul sought for a resting place, but found none until Truth put forth her hand and pulled me into the Ark. Seven years ago, I plucked her beautiful olive branch of peace; it is an evergreen which time cannot wither or decay. I rejoice every day more and more, and although I labour with my hands to support three dear children and a sick husband daily, yet I grow in knowledge, and find the Lord prospers all I do, so that I can often administer to the wants of the saints, finding it indeed far more blessed to give than to receive.

I wish, my brother, you could hear our beloved and faithful Dr. Thomas. It is indeed a feast of fat things; and when I visit his house, and hear the words of eternal life drop from the faithful lips of his dear wife and daughter, I tell you my cup runs over: it is indeed good to have it full, but far better when it runs over. You will, I hope, soon hear our brother's voice, for he talks of leaving us in the early part of next year to visit England, and although I would rejoice to have him remain, yet I wish that the household should also be greatly strengthened.

I have two sisters in London, to whom I often write respecting the Truth, but no answer for good is returned; they think I am entirely lost. I have desired them to hear the Dr. if he visits London. I often feel very unhappy about them, but Truth has taught me to know no person after the flesh. It has separated me, and I am content to suffer the loss of anything but the Truth. I will hold that fast until Christ comes, for I want the pleasing sound to fall on my listening ear, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord, for to him that hath it shall be given, and he shall have more abundance."

Trusting you may contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the Saints, that you may grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and that grace, mercy, and peace may continue and abide

with you for ever; and with all the faithful everywhere, is the earnest prayer of

Your faithful Sister in the same blessed hope,

Author Unknown

When we are deeply and continuously engaged in an atmosphere of Divine thoughts, we have neither time nor inclination to plot mischief and play the fool. This is the vocation of vacant minds and idle hands, who know not what it is to enter within the veil.

Bro. John Thomas



The United
States
does

Chapter Ten

*The
Twilight
Years*

*What have we gained with the passing years?
Ah! treasures that repay;
We would not change them for all our wealth,
Old time hath borne away!
Knowledge and faith and truth and love,
More deep than youth can know.
True light now shines upon our way,
The way of life to show.*

Sis. R. Roberts

Climbing Higher



SOME regretfully speak of growing old and going downhill, but we should rather think of it as climbing higher and higher, and of getting nearer the things we long for. What a comforting promise for those advancing in years — for the aged believer is this: “Thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day; thou shalt be as the morning.” In the words of a beautiful old poem, we ask:—

*Who would exchange for shooting blade the waving,
golden grain?*

Or, when the corn is fully ripe, would wish it green again?

*And who would wish the hoary head found in the way of
truth,*

To be again encircled with the sunny locks of youth?

*For though in truth the outward man may perish and decay,
The inward man shall be renewed by grace from day to day;
They who are planted by the Lord, unshaken by their root,
E'en in old age shall flourish still, and still bring forth much
fruit.*

*It is not years that make men old; the spirit may be young
Though for three score years and ten the wheels of life
have run;*

*God has Himself recorded in His glorious Word of Truth
That those who wait upon the Lord, they shall renew their
youth.*

*And when the eyes now dim and weak shall then behold
the King,*

*And ears now dull with age shall hear the saints victorious
sing,*

*And on the head now hoary shall be placed the crown of
gold,*

Then shall be known the lasting joy of never growing old.

The friends of youth disappear like the summer flowers, and we seek their places in vain, for like the dew that sparkled but a moment on the flowers, they have vanished for a while: but God is still the strength of our life and our

increasing joy. As youth resembles the rose newly opened in early summer, so age is represented by the ripened fruit and waving corn. "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger," or, as we read in Job "Thou shalt come to the grave in a full age, like a shock of corn cometh in his season."

Of an aged brother it is recorded that "as the years fled, hope was still resplendent, faith brighter and brighter, and that love divine took possession of him more and more. At times he could scarcely restrain his emotion as he listened to some sentence that mirrored the mind of the Eternal, that brought in bold relief, the richly-studded promises set in the unfading richness and beauty of its literary flowers and fruit. In his face could be seen a love-lit radiance suffused with joy that flung itself back upon the speaker." And such should be the character of every golden sheaf.

A. Hopkins.

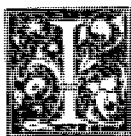
A Joy In Old Age



THE hope of seeing Jerusalem in her glory; of having the illustrious men we read of in the Holy Oracles as permanent companions; of an introduction to large numbers of Angels, yea, and many other pleasant surprises in addition; for we read that at God's right hand are pleasures for evermore. Would we have such as an anchor of the soul? Then the order is: "Tribulation worketh patience; patience, experience; and experience, hope." But we would say to the rising generation of those that fear God, and to all readers, that the tribulation is nothing compared to its value. Lay hold of it, and cling to it tenaciously as to a pearl of great price. Should our Lord tarry, it will protect you in youth; guide you through life; and be a consolation, a joy, and a cause of much thankfulness in old age.

J.B.

From Dr. Thomas' Daughter Aged 86



IN your desire to promote Unity of Spirit and concerted movement among believers of the Truth, you appeal to the hearts of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ and the service which pertains to his cause in the earth — to render aid and comfort and material help — as well as in your present efforts to realise substantial progress in this good work.

It should be the pleasing duty of our hearts to further such good work, especially in view of the signs, so prominent now, of the speedy Coming of the King of Israel, whose glorious wings overshadow Immanuel's Land and People in these latter Days.

We should rejoice to be permitted to see the rearing up of that Temple which is to be established in Judah's portion of the Holy Land when Abraham and Christ will be the reigning Sovereigns of the whole world, and will bless all the nations who are subject to their righteous rule; when the law shall go forth from Zion, and the Word of Yahweh from Jerusalem. Then will come to pass the words of the prophet saying, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins" "Behold the Lord God shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him . . . He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom". Then the children once more will join in the angelic song, "Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of Yahweh. Hosanna in the highest."

Sis. Eusebia J. Lasius.

It is necessarily the highest attainment possible to mortal man, to exercise himself in that which God takes delight, to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly.

Whatever, possesses almighty characteristics is golden. They who become constituents of the Most Holy, are they who have bought gold of the Spirit, "gold tried in the fire," by which they have become rich; and are adorned with golden stefans, and golden girdles. Their intellectual, moral, and physical qualities, are manifestations of the Eternal Father's; who thus equips them with infallible and invincible ability, to cause mankind to do His will upon earth, as it is done in heaven.

J. Thomas

Chapter Eleven

*The Coming
of
the Lord
Draweth Nigh*

Now is our opportunity for exercising ourselves in divine requirements. When Christ is in the earth, our one-time thirsty sister will not need a cup of cold water at our hands, our one-time ill-clad sister will not need our clothing. Too late will it be for our perishing neighbour to hear the gospel message from our lips. The door is open to us in these matters whilst Christ tarries. Woe unto us if we are not now busying ourselves in his concerns. We shall find to our cost that he who has opened so that no man can shut, will, in the day of his coming, shut so that no man can open.
C.H.J.

“The Master Is Come And Calleth For Thee”



WHEN Christ sends for us, very likely the message will come by the hands of an angelic visitor. The angels have always been used in times past in the furtherance of divine arrangements. They had much to do with the first advent of Christ, with his birth, his sufferings and his resurrection. And we know that at his second appearing he will be accompanied by a multitude of them. Now this may happen any day. Supposing you are sitting quietly by the fireside at night, with labours of the day completed, and you think of going to bed; how shall you feel if all of a sudden a beautiful and dignified visitor presented himself, with the intimation that “the Master is come and calleth for thee?” It will all depend upon the disposal you have been making of your time and your money and your strength. What sort of a day have you been spending? You have been exceedingly troubled, and taken up with business or the house. You have been in a ferment of discontent. You have been very angry with somebody. You have neglected your reading. You thought something else more important than the meeting. You have not been thinking about Christ at all; have not been doing anything for him — how shall you feel? Very much abashed, very much frightened, paralysed with consternation.

But let us suppose the case stands the other way. You are depressed with sorrow. You have had a hard fight. You have been harassed in a variety of ways; but you have done your duty. You have snatched your reading amidst the pressure of life's duties; you have given your countenance to the work done for Christ. You have preferred his assemblies to private or worldly pleasure. You have done what you could to promote his service in the proclamation of the Truth, the visitation and comfort of the lambs of his flock, and in the relief of his poor. You are sad with sadness the world does not understand. You are grieved at the triumph of Christ's enemies, the faithlessness and unconcern of those who profess his Name, or it may be at your own shortcomings hindering you in the race. The pressure of the individual circumstances bow you down. Your pocket may be empty, because of what you considered it your duty

to do. In tears, you pour out your complaint before God, and that messenger comes to you. How shall you feel? You shall feel as no language can express; you will not be filled with ecstasy, because the judgment has to pass before you know your lot; but you will feel a calm relief from the knowledge that there is nothing in the present state worth living for; and that your inmost desires and highest aspirations are towards the things that are of God. Joy (mixed with fear) will fill your heart, to know that God has taken the work in hand Himself.

You go to the judgment-seat, and whom do you meet there? Why, the man, who, above all others, has been for a life-time the cherished ideal of your heart, an ideal implanted there by the Truth, and which has been growing sharper in outline, clearer to the affections, more real to the assurance and consciousness as years roll by. You see him after whom your soul longs in whom you have confided all your hope, and for whom you have risked all your interests. Shall you be afraid now? You will tremble, because a righteous man has a deep sense of the greatness and holiness of God. You will feel in that great presence like Daniel in the presence of the angel. But listen, "Oh man, greatly beloved, be strong, and be of good courage".

Who would not labour for such a result? It is not too late for us to mend, to become devoted, to throw our soul into the things that belong to Christ. We may rest assured of this, that any man or woman who simply tinkers at Christ's work, who simply complements the Truth with a nominal adhesion, who is a mere patron of the Truth, who does not feel it a privilege of the highest kind to lay themselves on the altar of its service, aye, beneath the wheels of its chariot, if needs be, to be crushed in its onward progress, will be rejected. "If any man love father, mother, sister or brother, house or land more than me, he is not worthy of me."

R.R.

Christ Is Coming



THE day is breaking. If it takes a long time to break and is slow in coming, we must remember the day is long that is coming, and that if the night of sorrows reigneth, the dawn shall give us light. The darkness is not so deep as it was fifty years ago. The pitch blackness has given way to something like a twilight in which the forms of the mountains are dimly visible against the sky. The eastern horizon slowly lightens and suffuses with the blush of coming dawn. Soon the actual light will brighten all the air and gild the mountain tops. Soon a glorious shaft will strike athwart our sombreness and tell the awakening world that the sun at last has risen and ascends the morning sky.

R. Roberts

Shall We Fear To Meet Him?



HALL we fear to confront Christ? It is possible to do so unnecessarily. It has been argued that the uncertainty of Christ's verdict, coupled with the terrible pictures which the Scriptures give of the rejected, warrant fear. This is an unfortunate mistake. It is far from Christ's wish that we should dread his presence. Bible revelation is intended to inspire earnest, truth-loving men with confidence. Let us look at a few of the many beautiful Bible promises and assurances: "They shall never perish", "They shall be mine", "Shall change our vile bodies", "When he shall appear we shall be like him." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory". Of what value are such promises and assurances if the friends of Christ are going to shiver at the prospect of seeing him? As to uncertainty concerning the judgment verdict, this is a fault resting with ourselves, and

is remediable. If it is a question of not knowing whether we keep all Christ's commandments, then let us give greater study to the book of his law. Is it anxiety lest we keep not sufficiently these commandments? Let us set the mind at rest by remembering that Christ will cast off no one whose life is characterised by a desire to know and to do his will, however feeble and imperfect the result. It is only the idle, non-effort-making, wilful sinner that the Scriptures deprive of hope. Let us cheer up in the matter of the coming of Christ. To the humble and fearful heart God says: "Be strong, fear not." Misgiving means loss of strength, strength which no one can afford to lose in the struggle for life.

A.T.J.

The Glorious Light



HE glorious Light that will first be seen shining above the holy city Jerusalem will reach to earth's remotest bounds, until the earth will shine with His glory (Ezek. 43:2). What a most delightful prospect! Who could help rejoicing in the Truth? "Light indeed is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart" (Psa. 97:11). And having this desirable consummation in view, "let us cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light." Let us "walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8), having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness . . . for we have been called out of darkness into His marvellous light. (1 Pet. 2:9).

Least Expected

*The Judge of the earth is coming,
For the night is nearly spent;
And long hath the cry been given,
To the sons of men "repent"!*

*He'll come when he's least expected,
When there's mirth on every side;
When the merchant plies his business,
And the bridegroom woos his bride.*

*When the world, in scorn, is pointing
To the few who watch and wait,
There's a sudden start of terror —
For the Judge is at the gate.*

*Oh! the Lord is coming quickly,
Though the slumbers grow more deep,
Of the careless world that's lying
In a drunken, dreamy sleep.*

*And swift will be the awakening,
In an hour they thought secure;
For the vintage now is ripening,
And the harvest day is sure.*



The Judgment Seat of Christ



THEY who are truly "watching and keeping their garments" are blessed in that they see "the Sign of the Son of Man in the heaven," by which they are warned to trim their lamps with "the knowledge of the Deity's will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding," that, when his arrival is announced, they may go forth to meet him with all confidence and joy. They are "blessed" in being able thus to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, in the wilderness of Teman; but more blessed still will they be when the account they are able truthfully to render of themselves is accepted and approved; and they are pronounced by the Judge to be the blessed of his Father (Matt. 25:34); and are exalted to be sharers with him in his joy — Matt. 25:21. In this exaltation they will have attained to that perfect blessedness to which they were called in the gospel of invitation to "the marriage supper of the Lamb". They are "blessed and holy:" not blessed only, but *holy* likewise. "Be ye holy in all manner of conduct: because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy." This was their character in the days of their flesh. As such they are the Tree of Life, and the Great City, the holy Jerusalem, into which they have entered, and whose name is written upon each — Rev. 3:12. The door is yet open to all who aspire to so great and exalted a destiny; as it is written in Rev. 22:14, "Blessed they who do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

J. Thomas

The Resurrection Tree

*The naked, sleeping almond tree
With dark limbs spread
Against swift wind clouds riding free
High overhead,
Speaks of the wintry night of death
In earth's full womb,
Where saints devoid of living breath
Sleep in the tomb.*

*But soon the songbirds' melody
Proclaiming spring,
Awakes the sleeping almond tree
And blossoming,
It deeply breathes crisp fragrant air,
And leaves appear.
Soon petals fall from blossom fair —
The fruit is near.*

*Bare almond tree, the first of trees
To hear the sound
Of herald spirit in the breeze,
And in the ground,
Speaks of the day when from the dust
Each sleeping saint
Will rise — the faithless and the just
Fearless or faint.*

*Spring comes, and nature's lessons tell
That longing Bride
That her beloved soon will quell,
Death's constant tide.*

*"Come forth, my love, my sister spouse,"
His voice is dear,
"A gem to grace my Father's House
The day is near."*

My speech shall be
as the small rain upon the grass,
and as the showers upon the grass,



*Each day I look for swelling bud,
As winter dies,
For first faint pink of almond bud
'Gainst azure skies.
It tells me to await my Lord.
So eagerly,
And rip'ning fruit will health afford
Eternally.*

Sis. B. Flint.

Every resurrected saint will be a dew drop. Sparkling in the starlike glory of a divine refraction

Eureka

Immortality



LORIOUS indeed will it be, with unlimited strength and perfect capacity for the appreciation of what is truly good, to traverse earth's delightful regions, and look with immortal eyes upon her emerald pastures, far-spreading woodlands and her lichen and heather-clad hills, interspersed with vine or ivy-covered cottages, where the happy, peaceful inhabitants may sit under the shade of their own vine or willow, and none shall dare to make them afraid.

How sweet to roam the flowery lanes in company with those who have learned to know the Lord, and can sing the new song, and to commune one with another of the goodness of our God, His wonderful condescension, tender mercies, and loving-kindnesses! In His holy presence there will be fulness of joy, and at His right hand pleasures for evermore.

Oh! to pass through the fair fields of waving, golden corn; to see the clean, healthy cattle, the noble beasts whose ferocity has all vanished, for the little children may

caress them unharmed. When the countenance of youth and age wears a look of gladness and deep satisfaction, and every one speaks in honour of the Immortal King. Think of the stern, silent grandeur of the great mountains standing out boldly against the azure sunlit skies, in contrast to the rich, peaceful vales below, in verdure clad, and ringing again with the music of bright plumaged, happy birds, while here and there we catch the glitter of clear, silvery streams, which water the valleys as they guide onward to the sea.

Think, too, of the lovely glens and dales, and the craggy rocks over which the sparkling foaming torrent leaps and bounds. What an inexhaustible wealth of beauty lies around such regions, even at present. Can we imagine the picture when, "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree, and the wilderness, and the solitary or parched land, shall be glad: and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose"; when the eyes of the blind shall be open and the deaf made to hear, the dumb are able to sing, and the lame leap as a hart; when in the wilderness waters break out and streams in the desert, and the glowing sand becomes a pool, and the thirsty ground, springs of water.

Alice Hopkins

The Marriage of the Lamb



time of great glory is destined to open out upon the world, in which the Lord will be honoured before all. There will be a grand union of the members of the bride, glorious friendships re-forged, grand hopes realised, and a wonderful union established between the Lord Jesus and his associates. The bitterness of the present will no longer remain, the difficulties and trials of the current age will give place to the gladness of the future, "for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready."

A Foretaste Of The Future

*"Great and marvellous thy works, O Yahweh Elohim
almighty;
Just and true thy ways, O King of the Saints;
Who shall not fear thee, O Yahweh, and glorify thy Name?
For thou only art absolutely pure:
For all the nations shall come, and do homage before thee;
Because thy righteous judgments have been made mani-
fest."*



WHEN the judgment is over; then the Millennial Day of Christ will have come: the strong nations, recently so terribly rebuked, will be awaiting their conqueror's law; and the Saints resting from their judicial military labors, are henceforth blessed with the peaceable and glorious possession of the kingdom, without a disturbing element within or from without, to ruffle the glassy sea, over which is extended, for a thousand years, their righteous and almighty rule. Then their wars shall have ceased to the ends of the earth (Psa. 66 and 67), and they are exalted over the subject nations; then the new law will be proclaimed from Zion and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem — Micah 4:2. By this law, "a New Heaven, and a New Earth" is created, in which Jerusalem is created a rejoicing, and her people a joy. Israel is admitted into the bond of the covenant, the truth and the mercy sworn to their fathers Abraham and Jacob from the days of old. Henceforth the voice of weeping will be heard no more in Jerusalem, nor the voice of crying. Long life will bless her citizens, whose lives shall be enduring as a tree; and they shall long enjoy the work of their hands. Peace will be extended to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like a flowing stream. The Bride the Lamb's wife will be there, as the Queen arrayed in the gold of Ophir, whose beauty will be greatly desired by the King, and her favor entreated by the rich among the peoples — Mic. 7:20; Isa. 65:17-24; Psa. 66.

Such will be the blessedness of the Firstborn of the nations. The brilliant and precious living stones of fair colors, the immortal constituents of the Bride, will be kings and priests in all the earth. The nations, freed from

the dominion of thieves and robbers, and enlightened in the truth, which they will heartily believe, will be permitted to enter into the covenant of the Most Holy; and thus to be joined to Yahweh, and to become his people in fellowship with Israel. One economy, or administration, will rule the world in righteousness, all of whose nations, being justified by faith, will be blessed in and with faithful Abraham, as the gospel of the kingdom preached to him has long declared. There will then exist a world of enlightened nations, ruled by the one body in perfect harmony with the truth, or word then proclaimed from Jerusalem.

*J. Thomas
Eurkea*

A People Prepared For The Lord



Being destitute of all true riches and good things by nature, our benevolent Creator has offered us "glory, honour, incorruptibility, and eternal life," with an "inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that shall never fade away." He invites us in the Gospel to become heirs of these things; and, by our future conduct, to prove ourselves worthy to possess them. Would you not be arrayed in splendour which will excell the glory of the Sun? Would you not be exalted to the dignity of associate kings with the glorious monarch of the Future Age? Would you not be invested with an incorruptible life, that you may eternally enjoy "the inheritance in the light" which is to be revealed at the appearing of the "bright and morning star"? Let, then, the dispositions of the ancient Christians be revived in us, their descendants; and let us forsake our disobedience, and return to the wisdom of just persons; and thus the Truth will make of us "a people prepared for the Lord."

J. Thomas

The Glorious Consummation



BEHOLD, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. 32:1-2). Those whose characters shall be able to stand the test of trial, are addressed in these words: "Look upon Zion, the city of solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down: not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams" (Isa. 33:20-21). "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of Elohim, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved; God shall help her and that right early. The heathen (or nations), raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted." When these prophetic utterances shall be fulfilled, then, in the fulness of that glorious manifestation, of the Name, *Yahweh Elohim* will appear these words: "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*" (Psa. 46:11). "The Lord reigneth: let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubim; let the earth be moved. The Lord is great in Zion: he is high above all the people. Let them praise thy great and terrible name: for it is holy" (Psa. 99:1-3).

Sis. E. Lasius

For Great is Yahweh, and greatly to be praised, he also is to be feared above all gods.

For all the gods of the people are idols, but Yahweh made the heavens.

Glory and honour are in His presence, strength and gladness are in His place.

Give unto Yahweh, ye kindred of the people give unto Yahweh glory and strength.

Give unto Yahweh the glory due unto His Name: bring an offering, and come before Him: worship Yahweh in the beauty of holiness.

Fear before Him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved.

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice and let men say among the nations, Yahweh reigneth.

Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.

Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of Yahweh because He cometh to judge the earth.

O give thanks unto Yahweh for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever.

And say ye, Save us O Elohim of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to Thy holy name and glory in Thy praise.

Blessed be Yahweh Elohim of Israel for ever and ever.

1 Chron. 16:25-36

Selah