HARVESTS AND ORCHARDS.

Analogy Between Production of Crops and Growth of Grace.

A despatch from Washington says: —Rev. Dr. Talmage preached from the following text:—"My father is the husbandman."—John xv. 1.

Will it not be appropriate if I preach a harvest sermon? We were nearly all of us born in the country. We dropped corn in the hill, four grains to the hill; and went on Saturday to the mill, tying the grist in the centre of the sacks, so that the contents on either side the horse balanced each other, and drove the cattle a-field, our bare feet wet with the dew; and rode the horses with the halter to the brook until we fell off: and hunted the mow for nests until the feathered occupants went cackling away. In Bible times the land was so plentiful and the inhabitants so few that Noah was right when he gave to every inhabitant a certain portion of land, that land, if cultivated, ever after to be his own possession. All classes of people were expected to cultivate ground except ministers of religion.

This was the rule in regard to the culture of the ground: "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together," illustrating the folly of ever putting intelligent and useful and pliable men in association with the stubborn and the unwieldy. The vast majority of trouble in the churches and in the reformatory institutions comes from the disregard of this command of the Lord: "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together." There were large amounts of property invested in cattle. The Moabites paid over one hundred thousand sheep as an annual tax. Job had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen. The time of vintage was ushered in with mirth and music. The clusters of the vine were put into the wine press and then five men would get into the press and trample out the juice from the grape until their garments were saturated with the wine, and they became the emblems of slaughter, Christ himself wounded until covered with the blood of crucifiction, making use of this allusion. When the question was asked: "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel and thy garments like one who treadeth the wine vat?" he responded: "I have trodden the wine press alone!"

In the first place I remark, in grace as in the fields there

MUST BE A PLOUGHING.

That which theologians call conviction is only the ploughshare turning up the sins that have been rooted and matted in the soul. A farmer said to his indolent son: "There are a hundred dollars buried deep in that field." The son went to work and ploughed the field from fence to fence, and he ploughed it very deep, and then complained that he had not found the money; but when the crop had been gathered and sold for a hundred dollars more than any previous year, then the young man took the hint as to what his father meant when he said there was a hundred dollars buried down in that field. Deep ploughing for a crop. Deep ploughing for a soul. He who makes light of sin will never amount to anything in the church or in the world. If a man speaks of sin as though it were an inaccuracy or a mistake instead of the loathsome, abominable, consuming and damning thing that God hates—that man will never yield a harvest of usefulness.

The difficulty with a great many people is that they are only scratched with conviction when the subsoil plough of God's truth ought to be put in up to the beam. My word is to all Sabbath-school teachers, to all parents, to all Christian workers: Plough deep! Plough deep! And if in your own personal experience you are apt to take a lenient view of the sinful side of your nature, put down beside your soul the ten commandments which boomed from the artilleried mount, and study the holiness of God, and before you get through, the team with flaming nostrils will be harnessed to the sharpened and glittering coulter that will turn up your soul to the deepest depths. Plough up to the cross. Aim not at either end of the horizontal piece of the cross, but at the upright piece, at the centre of it—the heart of the Son of God who bore your sins and made satisfaction. Crying and weeping will not bring you through. "Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a Saviour to give repentance." Oh, plough up to the cross!

Again: I remark, in grace as in the field there

MUST BE A SOWING.

In the autumnal weather you find the farmer going across the field at a stride of about twenty-three inches and at every stride he puts his hand in the sack of grain, and he sprinkles it over the field. It looks silly to a man who does not know what he is doing. He is doing a very important work. He is scattering the winter grain, and the snow may come, but the next year there will be a great crop. Now, that is what we are doing when we are preaching the gospel, when we are scattering the seed. It is the foolishness of preaching, but it is winter grain, and though the snows of worldliness may come down upon it, it will yield after a while a glorious harvest. Let us be sure we sow the right kind of seed. Sow mullein stalk, and mullein stalk will come up. Sow Canada thistles, and Canada thistles will come up. Sow wheat, and wheat will come up. Let us distinguish between truth and error. Let us know the difference between wheat and hellebore and henbane and coloquintida. The Lord Jesus Christ nineteen centuries ago planted one red seed of doctrine. It sprang up. On one side of the stalk are all the churches of Christendom; on the other side of the stalk are all the free governments of the earth, and on the top there shall be a flowering millennium after a while. All from one red seed of doctrine. Every word that parent or Sabbath school teacher, or city missionary, or Christian worker speaks for Christ, comes up with compound interest. You, saving one soul, that one saving ten, the ten a hundred, the hundred a thousand, the thousand ten thousand, the ten thousand a hundred thousand—on, on forever. It seems very insignificant to see a mother teaching her child, "Now I lay me down to sleep."

Again I remark, in grace as in the farm, there

MUST BE A REAPING.

Many Christians speak of religion as thouh it were a matter of economies or of insurance. They expect to reap in the next world. Oh, no, now is the time to reap. Gather up the joy of the Christian religion this morning, this afternoon, this night. If you have not as much grace as you would like to have, thank God for what you have, and pray for more. You are no worse enslaved than Joseph, or worse troubled than was David, or worse tempted than was Daniel, or worse scourged than was Paul. Yet amid the rattling of fetters and the gloom of dungeons and amid the horror of shipwreck, they triumphed in the grace of God. The weakest man in this house this morning has 500 acres of spiritual joy all ripe. Why do you not go and reap it? You have been groaning over your infirmities for thirty years. Now give one round shout over your emancipation. You say you have it so hard. You might have it worse. You wonder why this great cold trouble keeps revolving through your soil like a grindstone, turning and turning with black hand on the crank. Ah! that trouble is the grindstone on which you are to sharpen your sickle. To the fields! wake up! Take off your green spectacles, your blue spectacles, your black spectacles. Pull up the corners of your mouth as far as you pull them down. To the fields! Reap! Reap!

The Saviour folds a lamb in his bosom. The little child filled all the house with her music, and her toys are scattered all up and down the stairs just as she left them. What if the hand that plucked four-o'clocks out of the garden is still? It will wave in the eternal triumph. What if the voice that made music in the home is still? She will sing the eternal hosanna. Put a white rose in one hand, and a red rose in the other hand, and a wreath of orange blossoms on the brow—the white flower for the victory, the red flower for the Saviour's sacrifice, the orange b'ossom for her marriage day. Anything ghastly about that? Oh, no. The sun went down and the flower shut. The wheat threshed out of the straw. "Dear Lord, give me sleep," said the dying boy, the son of one of my elders. "Dear Lord, give me sleep," and he closed his eyes and awoke in glory.

I have one more thought to present. I have spoken of the ploughing, of the sowing, of the harrowing, of the reaping. I must now speak a moment of

THE GARNERING.

Where is the garner? Need I tell you? Oh! no, so many have gone out from your own circle—yea, from your own family, that you have had your eye on that garner for many a year. What a hard time some of them had. In Gethsemanes of suffering they sweat great drops of blood. They took the trembling cup and put it to their hot lips and cried, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me." Pursued and hounded and crushed, with tongues of burning agony they cried: "O Lord, deliver my soul." But they got over it. They all got over it. Garnered! Their tears wiped away. Their battles all ended. Their burdens lifted. Garnered! The Lord of the harvest will not allow those sheaves to perish in the equinox. Garnered! Some of us remember on the farm that the sheaves were put on the top of the rack which surmounted the wagon, and these sheaves were piled higher and higher, and after a while the horses started for the barn, and these sheaves swayed to and fro in the wind and the old wagon creaked, and the horses gave a struggle and pulled so hard the harness came up in loops of leather on their back, and that when the front wheel struck the elevated floor of the barn, it seemed as if the load would go no farther, until the workmen gave a great shout, and then with one last tremendous strain the horses pulled in the load. Then they were unharnessed, and forkful after forkful of grain fell into the mow. O my friends, our getting into heaven may be a pull, a very hard pull, but these sheaves are bound to go in. The Lord of the harvest has promised it. I see the load at last coming to the door of the heavenly garner. The sheaves of the Christian soul sway to and fro in the wind of death, and the old body creaks under the load, and as the load strikes the floor of the celestial garner it seems as if it can go no farther. It is the last struggle until the voices of angels and the voice of our departed kindred, and the welcoming voice of God shall give a shout that shall send in the harvest rolling into the eternal triumph, while all up and down the sky the cry is heard: "Harvest home! Harvest home!"

THE IRONY OF INITIALS.

Parents Should Be Careful In Naming Their Children.

When parents are exercising their ingenuity in choosing names for their hopeful offspring it rarely occurs to them to make sure that the initials do not form some combination for which their children will scarcely "rise up and call them blessed" in later years.

For instance, the boy who was given the not unpleasant name of Arthur Stanley Smith and the girl who signs her name Ida Marie Paterson will scarcely be proud of their respective initials, A. S. S. and I. M. P.

Some of the combinations which have come under the writer's observation are, to say the least, amusing. There is, for instance, a certain well-known temperance advocate whose initials are R. U. M., but who very wisely drops the second letter and is content with one Christian initial; while a man who is constantly appearing in the American police-courts, charged with being drunk and disorderly, ought, according to his initials, drink nothing stronger than T. E. A., for his name is Titus Exeter Alexander.

A gentleman who not long ago figured as defendant in a breach of promise case had the singularly appropriate initials of W. O. O.; while the plaintiff's name was Susan, and she had, with unconscious prevision, been addressed by her lover in scores of amorous letters as "my darling Sue."

In another breach of promise case the defendant's initials were sadly ominous of the issue of the action, for his name was Percy Alfred Y——, and he signed the initials "P. A. Y."

THE DIVORCE COURT

records are full of similar strange coincidences, some of which are so remarkable as to seem scarcely credible. The initials of one lady respondent were F. A. L. S.; and of another F. R. A. L.; one good lady whose conduct scarcely seemed to have justified the description had the initials P. R. U. D.; and the petitioner in a case which attracted considerable attention a few years ago was Stephen Oliver Lionel D——, whose initials, S. O. L. D., must have strangely described his experiences of matrimony.

A very modest, hard-working minister of the Gospel, goes through life branded with the curiously inappropriate initials of F. O. P.; another, whose eloquence is perhaps a little florid and vaporish, boasts the not unsuitable letters G. A. S., initials borne by the late Mr. Sala. A third clergyman is known by the initials S. I. N.; and a fourth goes a step farther, and when he signs his full initials, which he rarely does, one may be sure, writes himself down S. A. T. N.

One of the earliest of this century's brides changed her initials, W. E. N., to W. E. D., a singularly happy and appropriate change; while a well-known society young lady, who was married two years ago, became, in her new character of wife, M. A. I. D. The wife of one of London's preachers, a lady of singular sweetness of disposition, has the initials S. H. R. E. W.; while, such is the irony of initials, a woman who was charged at a Scotch police-court a few weeks ago with a brutal assault on an invalid husband, boasted the letters P. E. T.

A clever tutor in the North of England is Mr. J. A. Cass; and a London official, who is very far from answering to the description, has to write himself down a H. A. S. S."

DENOUNCING THE BOLSTER.

At a recent meeting of the French Hygienic Society M. Feret made an impassioned appeal to civilized society to go to sleep in a horizontal position. "We submit to the bolster," he exclaimed. "But does it follow that the bolster is a necessary or a healthy institution?" Of course the question was answered with a strong negative, and the negative was justified by a whole host of scientific reasons. The horizontal position is the only hygienic one, but, since man is innately conservative and opposed to sudden reforms, M. Feret begs that the bolster be abolished forthwith and the pillow gradually diminished to the vanishing-point.

The Mohommedan year begins in July; that of the Persian on August 11th.

During the siege of Paris 64 balloons left the city with 91 passengers, 354 pigeons, and 9 tons of letters.

THE S. S. LESSON.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, AUG. 1.

Text of the Lesson, Gen. xv., 1-18. Golden Tex Gen. xv., 1.

1. "After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision." Among "these things" must be included the Melchisedek story of the previous chapter which the Holy Spirit considered of such importance that he speaks of it and its relation to Christ in Ps. cx and in Heb. v, vi and vii. Let no teacher therefore pass it by. Note the new name of Deity "the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth," and consider its use elsewhere. The blessing of Him who owns all things enables us to rise above the temptation to look at or long for the things or the help of this world. All believers, as children of Abram, must not fail to give at least the tithes to our Melchisedek. Note the suggestiveness of the bread and wine. We have in our lesson to-day a good many words and phrases used for the first time, such as "the word of the Lord," "fear not," "shield," "reward," "believed," "righteousness," etc., and as the first use of a word helps us to undersand its significance, we have a most important lesson. "The word of the Lord" may refer to the message which came to Abram or it may refer to the messenger, the Lord Himself (John i, 1; Rev. xix, 13.) When we read the word of God we must accept the messages as specially for us. This first "fear not" takes us to the many other similar words in this precious book, among which these have been and are a great help, Isa. vii, 4; xli, 10, 13; xliii, 1; Joel ii, 21; Mark v, 36.

2-3. "And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?" He reminded God that he was still childless and seemed to wonder how and when the promised seed would come. His faith was still weak, but growing. Faith cometh by hearing the word of God (Rom. x, 17), and the more of His word we hear and receive the more faith we will have. In the New Testament record the failings are omitted, and only the mighty faith is seen. So when our story is finished it shall be seen that the precious blood has put away all that was of us, and therefore sinful, and only that which was wrought in us by God shall be seen. Note Heb. xi, 8-19; Rom. iv, 18-21.

4-6. "And he believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness." Abram is assured that his heir shall not be any one merely born in his house, but shall be his very own child, whom heaven shall in due time give him. How suggestive the words, "Look now toward heaven!" This should be the attitude of every believer at all times, never relying upon an arm of flesh nor upon any human device, but upon the Lord alone. The record of the next chapter had never been if Abram had persisted in looking heavenward. In last lesson we noticed the promise that his seed should be as the stars and its probable significance. Abram received the word. Literally he amen'd God or said amen to God. The Holy Spirit has noticed this three times in the New Testament (Rom. iv, 3, 21, 22; Gal. iii, 6; Jas. ii, 23) and strongly emphasizes this great truth, that the righteousness which God requireth can never become ours by any works of ours, but only by faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. iv, 5; Eph. ii, 8, 9; Titus, iii, 5).

7. "I am the Lord." That should settle everything and dispel every fear. Notice how it begins and ends the seven great "I wills" of Exodus vi. 6-8. Notice it as a sufficient reason for all that God requires of them (Ex. xx, 2; Lev. xxii, 31-33; xxiii, 43) and an all sufficient assurance to them that He will do what He says (Ezek. xxxvi, 22, 23, 32, 36), and the great truth that all nations have yet to learn (xxxviii, 23).

8-11. "Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Strong and weak, steadfast and wavering, up and down, seems to have been the way with him as he grew in grace and in the knowledge of God. Therefore be not discouraged, weak and trembling one, for the Lord will perfect all that concerns you for His name's sake. The creatures that he took at God's command and prepared as a sacrifice comprised all ever used as types of the great sacrifice of the Son of God. If you ask, "How shall I know?" the answer is, "Behold the Lamb of God." See the love of God in the gift of His dear Son and believe Rom. viii, 32.

12-16. The shadow of coming events casts itself upon him, and the Lord tells him of the coming centuries, of a great bondage and a great deliverance at an appointed time. And so it came to pass. He declares the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. xlvi, 10). Compare Ex. xii, 40, 41, and note how all came to pass just as the Lord said. See also I Kings xii, 2, and II Kings xxiii, 16, 17, as an illustration of the literal and exact fulfillment of prophecy. Neither Abram nor his seed could inherit the land just then because the iniquity of the inhabitants was not yet full. One reason why our Lord does not come and judge the nations is because their iniquity has not yet come to a head. There is a proper time to lance a boil. Our Lord will not be too late in attending to the gathering.

17. The smoking furnace and the burning lamp describe the way of the people of God as they journey to the kingdom. There will be the furnace, but His word will prove an unfailing lamp. In the world we shall have tribulation. We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom, but we need not be troubled (John xiv, 1, 27; xvii 33; Acts xiv, 22; Math. xxiv, 6), for nothing can come to us that will not prove to be the best for us in the light of the glory, and His presence will always sustain us (Rom. viii, 28; Isa. xliii, 1, 2).

18-21. Here we have for the first time the boundaries of the land well defined, not simply what we know as Canaan, but from Egypt to the Euphrates, an abundant possession for all Israel when they shall have returned to their own land from all the nations where they are now scattered, for they are to dwell in their land, a united people under one King, never to be scattered or pulled up out of it any more (Ezek. xxxvii, 21, 22; Zeph. iii, 19, 20; Amos ix, 14, 15). He will yet perform the truth to Jacob and the mercy to Abram which he has sworn from the days of old (Mic. vii, 20). May we be fully persuaded that what God has promised He is able to perform and fearing no evil, walk humbly with him in quietness and in confidence.

A REFUGE FOR ROGUES.

Outlaws From Every Country Gather in Honduras.

There is one corner of Central America that is at present a perfect paradise for men who have committed any crime. It is a place where the outcasts of the world's society rule the land of their adoption, and where the officials of the Government protect all thieves that come to them and make it dangerous for any detective to molest them.

This is the Republic of Honduras, one of the least advanced of the States of South or Central America. Honduras, indeed, is a curious mixture of jungle and gigantic forest, of cocoa and of rubber trees, of bugs, vampires, snakes, and crocodiles—of all manner of things that creep and crawl and sting and bite; a region where life in the daytime is a mockery, and at night one feels as though sleeping in red pepper.

Here, in every hamlet and city, are to be found men from different lands mostly outlaws from their own country. Chicago, Boston, New York, and Philadelphia all furnish their quota. England, France, Italy, and even far away Russia have their share. They make no attempt at concealment, bear the names they were born to bear, and go along about their own business as if the laws of their own country had not made them outcasts.

BRITISH CABINET WAGES.

The annual "wages bill" of the British Cabinet is no light sum—at present it nearly reaches £100,000; or, to be exact, it amounts to £93-550. Of the Cabinet as at present constituted the best-paid is the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, who receives £20,000 a year; the Lord Chancellor comes next with £10,000, and the Irish Lord Chancellor's salary is £8,000. Seven Ministers—respectively stationed at the Foreign, Colonial, War, India, Treasury, and Home Offices, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer—are paid £5,000 each which is the standard salary for a Secretary of State; while the First Lord of the Admiralty has £4,550. The remaining eight members of the Cabinet are each given £2,000 per annum. The offices of the Irish Chief Secretary and of Postmaster-General are respectively rated at £4-425 and £2,500.

USE FOR THE PHONOGRAPH.

Parrots are now taught to speak by machinery. One bird-fancier in London educates on an average forty birds a month, and does it entirely by means of phonographs. The parrots' class-room is divided up into little compartments, which are kept quite dark. Each bird is placed in a separate compartment, and two or three times a day a phonograph is left with it. The machine is quite automatic, and will repeat a sentence or a number of sentences over and over again for hours, so that the birds very soon learn to imitate the weird mechanical voice that comes out of the darkness.

WARLIKE ENGLISH SURNAMES.

The registers that have been preserved at Somerset House since 1837 furnish what seems at first sight to be a complete series of surnames connected with war. Supplying in the first place that invariable cause of hostilities, Quarrell, they lead on to Allies, Challenge, Charge Battle, Greatbattle, Rout, Victory and Conquest. They proceed, as it would appear, to enumerate in detail the ghastly results of conflict in the names Gash, Gore, Slaughter, Carnage and Corpse; and seem to furnish particulars of war material in Powder, Shot, Bullet, Shell, Cannon, Sword and Lance. They mention, too, the Gunner, and further specify his deadly charges in Cannister and Grape.

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from $5,000 to $1,000.

Cutting down my life insurance

What item is that? demanded Mrs. Chugwater.