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EDITORIAL

Memory Making

Some one has said that the memory is worth more than a gold mine; yet plenty of people in the world would be only too thankful if they could lose their recollection of at least a part of their lives. Instead of finding joy in remembrance, they are tortured by it. The unkindness of which they were guilty, their cruelty to those who loved them, their failure to stand up under responsibilities, their cowardice or meanness or ingratitude, are always lurking in the background of their consciousness ready to spring out and torture them. Your memory may be a fountain of joy as long as you live, or it may be a source of misery. All depends on that which you put into it. To-day you are storing up memories for the future. Will they be a comfort to you when your hair is white, or will they be of such a sort that in days to come you will be afraid to be left alone, left to the mercy of your memories?

Changes

It seems to be the usual procedure in sports to talk baseball as soon as the hockey team is eliminated from the running, and in some municipalities it must be admitted that the baseball propaganda must needs start a long time before the season opens. The streets are drying up and the back lots now have some measure of a footing, and with the bright sun, the ball tossing will soon be a familiar in-between-time pastime. It's like the marbles and skipping ropes—the urge to use them comes for no accountable reason, but it always comes. Next fall there will be just as much impatience to pass on from the summer sports and a clamoring for the pastimes of winter. Year in and out the same urge for a change is there always. We suppose it is the same desire for a change that makes the housewife want to turn the house inside out from top to bottom every spring and fall. It is in the air right now. There'll be lots of setbacks and cool weather before the balmy breezes blow, but every activity seems to have a spring activity.

Another Precedent

The Walkerton Herald-Times says: "Solicitor has advised Wentworth County Council it cannot grant $800 to combat the warble fly. That work is so essential it might have been better to have granted the money and asked the solicitor nothing about it." Apparently the Halton County Council just went ahead at the last meeting and authorized the expenditure on the material to combat the warble fly, but the decision was just barely a majority one. There is no question that the plan is a commendible one, but the expenditure by the County Council on an item that benefits a section only of the County is one that is another dangerous precedent. Of course the County Council is used to establishing precedents, and apparently has no fear in this connection so that possibly another one or two makes little difference. The principle is the same as in the Burlington guarantee—only a section of the County benefits, and yet all share in the obligation. If memory serves us right we believe a stipulation is made for the guidance of Council to the effect that legislation for individuals or certain groups may not be passed.

Canadian Building Activities

Construction contracts awarded in Canada during February totalled $10,672,200, according to figures released by MacLean Building Reports Ltd. Building activities were greatest in the Province of Ontario, where 338 contracts, aggregating $6,792,100 were awarded. Quebec ranked second with contract awards to the value of $1,484,500. Of the total contracts awarded, engineering projects accounted for $4,401,900 and business construction accounted for $4,306,600, which included contracts for 73 public buildings with a value of $3,267,700.

Ridiculous But True

Now that hockey is no longer a contentious question, we presume the next argument that will be of any size prior to the summer sports will be the daylight saving question. Next month Toronto and some other centres will adopt the measure. At other times for a month or more other places will adopt the daylight saving time, and for two months there will be a degree of uncertainty within a radius of fifty to seventy-five miles of Toronto. There seems little use in advancing any plan to avoid the confusion since all factions are set that their plan is the most feasible. The question is so big or so small that it is doubtful if either the Dominion or Provincial Governments will dare to mix into the muddle. And so municipalities can prepare, from April until October, to again carry on in a confusion of times. The whole thing looks ridiculous, but experience would seem to point that the question cannot be settled. Let us hope that the war threats do not take on a more serious aspect when such little differences of an hour in time cannot be more uniformly settled.

Changing to Suit Conditions

The action of the Council in reducing the size of Acton Welfare Board to cope with present conditions is one that will commend itself to all those who have made a study of these matters. Acton's Board as originally planned and carried on until the present has functioned well. When it is considered that until the present year not one per cent. has been paid for relief out of the municipal treasury, it is readily agreed that the Board has given good service. But this could not be carried on indefinitely and this year the Council was called upon to supply the funds required to carry on the work. With this change of plans it was obvious that the large committee was not further required, and the recommendation of the District Welfare Inspector to the Council was seen as the sensible thing to do. Started as an emergency plan the relief work has been carried on so long that it would seem that it is now part and parcel of the present affairs of the country, and the municipalities. Like the Mothers' Allowance, Old Age Pensions, etc., the welfare work appears to be here to stay. Many of the cases are not a direct result of the depression but quite often cases of individuals who are unable or incapable of working even if work were available. The small committee can give closer study to the matter and fit in with plans which seem to be more of the permanent nature. All the members have had considerable experience and have served on the former committee.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Shipment of Canadian dressed poultry to the British market during January totalled 871,000 pounds.

Germany evidently still considers scraps of paper very lightly. Apparently the last lesson has been forgotten.

Premier Bennett's relaxation from his onerous duties seems to be having the desired effect of restoring him to good health. It is hoped by all that he will soon recover.

Burlington is troubled over the selection of a site for a new Post Office. We know of another municipality that had a similar difficulty twenty years ago and hasn't secured the Post Office yet.

The reports of Germany's activities and preparations that can only ultimately culminate in war have been rather alarming the past week. It would seem that in a very few years the terrible sacrifices of 1914 to 1918 are forgotten and the same plans that led up to that catastrophe are being enacted.

There may be some people who do not realize the importance of professional hockey among our winter sports. For them, we pass on the news that when a Montreal club arrived in Windsor two hours late, coming from Chicago, the C. P. R. provided a special train to Toronto, so that they would not miss connections for Montreal.—Fergus News Record.

At a meeting of Oshawa City Council, last week, a resolution was passed unanimously permitting newspaper representatives to attend all committee meetings of Council. Commenting upon this reversal of a policy that had been in force for several years, the Oshawa Times says: "Where all business is transacted in a fair and above-board manner, and where there is nothing to hide, the press should be welcomed. It is only when the elected representatives of the people fear to have the light let in on their deliberations that exclusion of the press becomes necessary."

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 24th

PETER DESCRIBES THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Golden Text.—Sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord.—1 Peter 3: 15.

Lesson Text.—1 Peter 3: 8-18. Study, also, 2 Peter 1: 1-8; 3: 14-18.

Time.—A. D. 58. Place.—Unknown, but probably Jerusalem.

Exposition.—I. Of One Mind, 8, 9.

In this great passage, the Apostle Peter is not enjoining the Jewish Christians to whom he writes to be of one mind with the profane and idolatrous Gentiles amongst whom they were living; his word here is that, being believers in Christ Jesus, they should all agree in matters of faith and religion and, with one accord, embrace the Lord Jesus, the one and only Foundation. Moreover, he is anxious that none should seek for salvation through the law, but through Christ alone. And in like manner as they were to agree in matters of faith, so also were they to be in their attitude towards civil affairs—avoiding contention and strife. Peter's injunction is equally pertinent to present-day Christian living. We who profess the name of the Lord Jesus should be all of one mind cemented into a holy unity by the bond of a common sympathy; ministering to the saints; pitiful to the weak, erring and poor; courteous to equals; calm and forgiving under abuse; seeking peace; living under the smile of God. This oneness of mind does not demand the monotony of similarity, but unity in variety; not the oneness of a hop-pole or a pile of hop-poles, but of a plant which, with tendril, leaf and fruit, rears itself aloft in the summer air. Not the oneness of a brick or a pile of bricks, but of the house in which so many different materials and contrivances combine to shelter human life. Not the oneness of a child, but of a family of children who differ in age, character, temperament and chosen pursuits, yet are one in love and tender sympathy one towards another. "Having compassion one of another, be pitiful, be courteous." The sympathy suggested by Peter's word is a comprehensive feeling. It is not limited to any one kind of experience such as grief or pain. It must diffuse itself throughout the whole capacity of us all, and see how jangling discords subside before its gentle touch. There will be no room for envy or hatred or malice or uncharitableness. Let us seek this precious stream of harmony at the fountain-head. Let the love of Christ constrain us to be of one heart and soul.

II. Seeing "Good Days," 10-14.

He who would see good days must follow Peter's practical suggestions. To begin with, he will have to rule his speech. "Let him refrain his tongue from evil," demands the Apostle, "and his lips that they speak no guile." If we would see how this ruling of our speech stands related to "seeing good days," let us remind ourselves of how many of the misunderstandings, separations and troubles of our lives arise out of hasty, unwise, unkind, impure speeches. Then he will have to order his conduct; and that involves work of two kinds, each closely related to the other. As soon as we resolve to get our lives into good shape, we instantly find there is much to be cut out and cut off. The attaining of good goes hand-in-hand with the clearing out of evil. Here is set up the moral conflict of life. We must be doing good, seeking good, filling up our lives with good, so that evil cannot squeeze in edgeways. Always temptation gains its most effective victories over idlers; activity in goodness is our safeguard. Then, thirdly, if a Christian believer would "see good days," he must watch his daily relations with his fellows. "Let him seek peace and ensue it." If we would have peace—peace of mind, peace of heart, peace of soul—we must seek to understand peaceableness. We must acquire the spirit of the peacemaker; we must know how to be gentle, considerate, charitable, forgiving, even as was our Master.

III. God Sanctified in the Heart, 15.

"Sanctifying the Lord God" (v. 15) does not mean making Him holy, for He is already most holy, but REGARDING Him as holy, and thinking of Him in a fashion different from that in which we think of any other being. And it means more. It means treating Him as holy not only in our outward deeds or words, but in our secret nature, where those about us do not, and CAN not see us or know what passes in us. We must remember, moreover, that when the apostle says, "Sanctify the Lord God IN YOUR HEARTS" he does not give us a merely negative rule to follow, but a plainly affirmative one, as though he had said, "Ever have the thought of Him before your minds, and take care that it be a holy, reverent, and most sacred thought. And, finally, sanctifying the Lord God in our hearts must surely have a still more specific meaning. Not only are we to believe that the great God is, by reason of His omnipotency, present always and everywhere, but also to believe with our utmost exercise of faith that in a mysterious yet blessedly real and definite way present and indwelling in the hearts of all who have been made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.

IV. Having a Good Conscience, 16, 17.

The word "conscience" does not occur many times in the Scriptures — some thirty times in all—and not once in the Old Testament. Yet conscience is everywhere in the Bible, and in no book known to man is its voice heard more imperatively. Peter stipulates for the Christian believer that he have "a good conscience." And well he might, for conscience is the foundation of character. Does a man listen to the voice within him—can he look himself straight in the eye? That is one of the most important questions one can ask about ANY man. There are some men and women in this world who would almost as soon meet a tiger in the jungle as meet themselves in solitude. Yet if a man be accustomed, day by day, to bring his conduct under the survey of his own conscience, and if he be moved to joy or to sorrow which, in the sight of almighty God, that conscience pronounces, that man is safe. But conscience must never be confused with mere conscientiousness which may easily be little more than self-satisfaction. There are few things more astonishing in this world than the numbers of people there are living in it whose final judgment on themselves is this—that they have never done any one any harm, and have not much with which to reproach themselves. That reveals an unenlightened conscience. The human conscience requires to be made observant and sensitive by acquaintance with the law of God, as revealed in His Word, and especially as expounded by Christ Himself, when He taught that even when the outward conduct is ostensibly correct, the law may be broken in the secret, hidden places of the heart. Only when it is informed by faith and enlightened by the Holy Spirit can the Christian believer be described in the words of Peter as "having a good conscience." Such a conscience is a good companion for our days and a good bedfellow for our nights. Every effort should be made to preserve its integrity. And when life is moulded by such an inward influence, it will live down all misrepresentation and slander and it will outshine all the mists of envy and malice which have obscured its beams, it will falsify false reports. Detractors shall be made ashamed at the triumphant answer made to their accusations by the unblemished beauty of a holy Christian life; which those who love and fear God joyfully shall hear.

V. "The Just for the unjust," 18.

One of our greatest troubles, under the suffering which we feel ourselves or see all about us is, that it does not seem to fall upon the right people. But when our great Master approaches this very fact of suffering, we have reason to expect a word from Him regarding this most distressing feature of it. And it is here, in the final verse of our Lesson—"the just for the unjust," Christ suffered. That runs through all His life—the thought that it was the very sinlessness of that life which enabled Him to do the work for sinful men, that made Him able to take up the load. "There was no other good enough, to pay the price of sin." It is the privilege of strength to suffer for weakness. As it does so, strength is glorified; it conquers weakness, it spreads and magnifies the power of its own life, it becomes strength in the right place. Only the Mighty can help, and as He thus helps we look to His might, as the reason for it, and through the atoning work done for us we find our Saviour. We come to Him through gratitude, and as we reach Him we find One that is mighty to save. This illustrates the meaning of the last verse in our Lesson. All of us need to cling to the suffering and death of Christ and to feel that they contain the very power of our lives within them—the power of forgiveness and redemption, the power of happiness, the power of the life eternal for this world and for the world which is to come.

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