

The Stouffville Tribune

Established 1888

Member of the Canadian Weekly Newspaper Association

Issued every Thursday, at Stouffville, Ontario.

Eight to Twelve Pages - Average Circulation 1,500 Copies

Subscription Rates, per year, in advance:
In Canada \$2.00 In U.S.A. \$2.50

A. V. Nolan & Son, Publishers

Notes and Comments

Should Campaign for New Reservoir

The population of Stouffville points slowly upward, and the number of homes equipped with modern plumbing goes forward at a fair pace, all of which steadily increases the demand on the town reservoirs that supply our water requirements. Coupled with this is the potent fact that the springs supplying the reservoirs appear to be slowing down some. All this adds up to the fact that our water supply is steadily becoming inadequate. Users well know how they are warned every summer to "go slow" on the water, and orders are familiar forbidding the use of lawn hose.

All this could be very serious if the village council could not obtain an adequate water supply, but fortunately there is ample water on the property at the source of our supply to meet our needs for years to come. It must, however, be harnessed up.

We are fortunate enough to have more water running away through the creek than we could use if harnessed up. Those who have studied the situation are mostly in favor of installing another reservoir to avert a future shortage. The water system has sufficient surplus money to pay for the installation, and if any mistake in the past has been made it is because we have failed to build that extra reservoir so that it might be used today.

Preliminary steps to construction of a third reservoir, is the employment of an engineer, and the issuing of blue prints and plans. All this take endless time, and that is why the Board of Health are anxious that the village council do something about the matter immediately.

The people want an adequate water supply. They have the money on hand to pay for it, and they have the water, so there is nothing to prevent getting out definite plans so that construction may be provided immediately the labor situation is favorable.

Would Take Away Local Autonomy

The splendid showing by the individual municipality in collection of unpaid taxes, should be a good answer to those in authority who are at this very moment planning to take away from the towns-townships and villages of Ontario the right to collect their own taxes. We are amazed that so little comment is found in the weekly press on the recent announcement that a bill is being formulated which is designed to not only take away the collection of taxes, but the right to employ local assessors.

The idea of the bill, as we understand it, is to make the assessment by a county board, and collect taxes through machinery to be set up in the various counties. We have yet to meet any person who favors the idea, but unless the municipalities wake up and take an interest, the bill may slip through the legislature before we wipe the sleep from our eyes.

Passing local authority to higher bodies, always brings with it increased costs. In most counties big staffs will have to be set up to handle the business, and it may mean extension to county buildings to take care of the increased employees.

The Department of Municipal Affairs is doing a good work in checking up on those municipalities who try to get employees to work for next to nothing, and employing incompetent help. If they continue to ply their effort in this behalf they will receive public applause, but to take away from the municipalities the right to handle their own dollars and make assessments, is something few will be in accord with.

Food Production Threatened

Farmers will be interested in an editorial from the Financial Post respecting the farm labor problem. The article has much to commend itself, but from observations we learn that farmers have little or no trouble sowing the crop. It is the cultivation and harvesting that presents a problem. The average farmer could sow double the crop he does if he wanted to, but to look after that crop and see it safely harvested is where the boot pinches. However, the idea of collective work is just as applicable to harvest as it is to sowing time. Here is what the Post published last week:

"This spring Canadian farmers are facing the most serious labor shortage in all their experience. The problem is especially grave in those areas which produce the bulk of the food needed most by Great Britain during the war. Unless some speedy and decisive action is taken it is quite possible that thousands of acres will go uncultivated this spring.

Last fall in a series of articles for a group of Canadian weekly newspapers, John Atkins, now Printing Administrator for Canada, made a valuable suggestion for easing the farm labor problem. He urged, wherever feasible, the pooling of farm machinery in various communities and putting it into 24-hour service during the rush periods.

Mr. Atkins pointed out that there was a good deal of farm machinery idle through lack of repairs and also that some in repair was not being used to the maximum extent. Mr. Atkins also pointed out that many garage mechanics and their garages throughout the country were unemployed or nearly so as a result of restrictions on gasoline for automobiles. The government, suggested Mr. Atkins, should organize these mechanics to pull all farm power machinery into first class shape. Then gangs would be sent up and down

Sunday School Lesson

Lesson for March 29

THE TRANSFIGURED CHRIST MEETS HUMAN NEED

Golden Text—And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God.
—Luke 9:43

THE LESSON AS A WHOLE

The Apostle Peter tells us that the Transfiguration was a picture of the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 1:16-18). In other words, it was a miniature of the Kingdom which is yet to be manifested in this world. Jesus Himself intimated that (Matt. 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27). Why these verses have been omitted from the sections upon which our present lesson is based seems passing strange. Apart from this introduction to the scene that follows, we would be left without the key as to its meaning, except for the explanation given by Peter. Our Lord desired some of His disciples to have a definite understanding of the nature of the Kingdom that they might be delivered from any preconceived notions of a merely worldly or carnal character.

The present application of the Transfiguration is linked with that which the Spirit of God brings before us in 2 Corinthians 3. "As we are occupied with the glorified Saviour, we ourselves, though still in our bodies of humiliation, are transfigured (it is the same word) into His image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Thus exhibiting in our measure the grace and holiness so fully seen in Him, we shall be in a position to manifest Him to a demon-controlled world, no longer helpless as were the disciples at the foot of the mount; for the risen Christ, who is Himself God, will work in and through us, both the willing and doing of His good pleasure."

THE HEART OF THE LESSON

The picture is a very complete one, setting forth the power and coming of our Lord Jesus as it will be manifested as His second advent. On the heavenly side we see the glorified Saviour and the risen and raptured saints associated with Him. Then the three disciples picture restored Israel in their natural bodies dwelling on the earth in that day of the Kingdom. The agonized father and his demon-controlled son set forth the condition in which the nations will be found, but from which they will be delivered at the second advent, when Satan's power will be broken and he will be exiled to the abyss (Rev. 20:1-3). The lesson for our age is that service to a needy world is dependent upon high spiritual experiences.

Verse by Verse

Verse 9:28—"About an eight days after these sayings." That is after His announcement of His forthcoming death and resurrection and of His second coming to set up His Kingdom in power (v.27). "He took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray." Tradition has associated this event with Mount Tabor, but it seems far more likely to have been Mount Hermon, which is "an high mountain" (Matt. 17:1; Mark 9:2). Every outstanding event in our Lord's life was preceded by special prayer. Luke gives more prominence to the prayer life of the Man Christ Jesus than the other synoptists.

Verse 29—"As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered." True prayer always has transforming effect. Here the glory of our Lord's person—His eternal deity—was shining out through the veil of His humanity. It was the manifestation of His true character, intended to make clear to His disciples who He really was.

Verse 30—"There talked with him two men, . . . Moses and Elias." Jesus was manifested, as the King-Messiah. With Him were seen one who had died long centuries before, now live and sharing His glory, and another who had been caught up to Heaven without passing through death, now resplendent in the brilliant light of the displayed Kingdom. These two—Moses and Elijah—picture the two classes of believers who will appear with Him in glory when the Lord Jesus comes again (1 John 3:2). The dead in Christ will be raised and the living changed and all be like Him in that day (1 Cor. 15:52).

Verse 31—"Who . . . spake of his decease." All Heaven was interested in the coming death of our Lord upon the cross, which has well been called "the center of two eternities."

NATION-WIDE PRAYER DATE WILL BE MARCH 29

Hon. Norman McLarty, secretary of state, announces a proclamation is being issued setting Sunday, March 29 as a national day of prayer.

"It is hoped . . . that the clergy of all denominations in Canada will take steps to arrange that in services the day of prayer will be observed," Mr. McLarty's statement said.

In setting March 29 as a day of prayer Canada acted on the request of the King.

"His Majesty has expressed the hope that on this day his people, wherever possible, will unite in giving thanks to Almighty God for past blessings and in humble prayer for strength and guidance in facing the task that lies ahead," said Mr. McLarty.

Moses, the lawgiver, and Elijah, the restorer, knew that the only hope for the salvation of sinful man was in the sacrificial death of Him with whom they conversed as they were manifested in glory that night upon the mount.

Verse 32—"When they were awake they saw his glory." Overpowered by natural weariness, the three disciples fell asleep, but when they were awakened they beheld the wonder-scene—the Kingdom in miniature—and heard the conversation of Jesus and the two Old Testament worthies.

Verse 33—"Let us make three tabernacles." Just what was in Peter's mind we may not say with certainty. Perhaps he did not know himself (Mark 9:6). But he evidently had some thought of making permanent the conditions seen that night. However, the time for this had not yet come. The heavenly visitors disappeared from view. Jesus was left alone, no longer transfigured but in "the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3). The glory had faded away. The earthly testimony was to be resumed. The cross must come before the Kingdom could be displayed openly.

Verse 34—"They feared as they entered into the cloud." That cloud suggested all the darkness and mystery that was yet to be endured before the Kingdom could become a reality and Jesus be fully glorified.

Verse 35—"This is my beloved Son." The Father's voice focused attention upon "Jesus only" (Mark 9:8). Neither Moses nor Elias could be recognized as upon the same level with Him who is Lord of all.

Verse 36—"They . . . told no man in those days." The remarkable things seen and heard that night were not for the multitudes, but were a special revelation for confirming the faith of the three disciples and fitting them for the testimony they were to bear after Christ's ascension to Heaven.

Verse 37—"When they were come down from the hill." The mountain experience soon ended. Then they descended to the plain below, where they were called upon to face the stern realities of a world suffering from the effects of its rebellion against God.

Verse 38—"Master, . . . look upon my son." How many an agonized parent has prayed in the same words.

Verse 39—"It teareth him that he foameth again." Brought into the presence of Jesus, the demon, evidently filled with fear and wrath, sought to do all the hurt possible to the youth he had controlled for years, ere his expulsion at the command of the Lord. Note the epileptic condition indicated by foaming at the mouth.

Verse 40—"Thy disciples . . . could not." Long before Jesus had given His disciples power over demons (Matt. 10:1, 8; Mark 3:14, 15), and on a later occasion, the seventy rejoiced that these evil spirits were subject to them (Luke 10:17). So it was very clear that the Twelve should have been able to deliver this poor boy from his terrible tralldom, but they were not abiding in communion with their Master and so they had no power against Satan's hosts.

Verse 41—"Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation." He saw the wretched, unbelief and insubjection of heart which made them inefficient and helpless in their hour of need.

Verse 42—"Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child." When brought directly to Him, the Lord commanded the foul spirit to come out of the lad, and at once the boy was freed from his tormentor.

Verse 43—"They were all amazed at the mighty power of God." It was God in Christ who was manifesting Himself thus to Israel.

Send The Tribune to absent friends.

On Being Ill

Zeno, the founder of the Stoic School of Philosophy, was one day shipwrecked on the coast of Attica. All his possessions were lost in the swirling water. Destined by this untoward happening to make his home among the Athenians he long afterward declared: "It was a prosperous journey for me the day I was shipwrecked."

Quite remarkable are the uses of illness or adversity. For one thing it enables us to discover who our real friends are. One day the Prophet Jeremiah sat, possibly by the side of the road, and cried: "Is it nothing to you, all ye who pass by? behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." To put it in modern terms what he meant was this: he craved for a friendly message by radio, or telephone, or letter, or flowers, or visitor. Well, what these friendly gestures would have done for him they will do for all the ill and the shut-in. Who does not know that hope and cheer are better tonics than bark and wine?

Illness or adversity, too, tends to make us sympathetic toward all the down-trodden and the stricken. Fire softens steel, but hardens clay. The action of suffering is much the same. What it does to the human spirit depends upon the attitude taken toward it. If the result is softening there is a mighty growth of sympathy and understanding. Cyrus, the Medo-Persian king who, unlike Hitler, was friendly toward the Hebrews, was in the habit of sending to his friends jars, filled with the products of his vineyards. One day he sent such a jar to a neighbor accompanied by a note which read like this: "I have not for a long time tasted sweeter juice of the grape than this and therefore I am sending it to you that you may share it with me." "It was good for me," said David, "that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes." And one of these statutes has much to do with sympathy and sharing.

Once again does not illness sometimes make us feel that we have been very foolish in the past in the treatment of our bodies? Cornaro tells us that he never knew the world was beautiful till he was growing old. Too many of us never discover at all the truth of the biblical declaration that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. The human body is the most intricate and delicate of all machines. What a beautiful temple it might become if, with a right beginning, it could have instructive care throughout the years! There is a great call to-day for preventive medicine. At no far-distant date the community, the county or the state will hire physicians whose function will be not only to treat us when we are sick, but also to teach us how to keep well. I am ashamed to confess that only now, in the eighth decade of my life, I am really learning how to live.

This long way round leads me to what I meant to say at first. I heartily thank all my neighbors and friends who have helped to make my "aside" more pleasant.
—Thomas H. Mitchell

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