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Notes and Comments

Now is Time to Act on Food

"There is just one thing more important than bullets in this war" says the Financial Post, "and that is food. Without an adequate supply of that vital commodity for ourselves and our allies then the fight is hopeless. But while Ottawa has done a great deal to develop an ample supply of munitions, its attitude has been disconcertingly complacent regarding food. Only in the last few weeks has some semblance of a co-ordinated production plan appeared and so far little has been done in assuring that this plan will be carried out.

For over a year farmers have been warning the Dominion government that they were running desperately short of help. Yet the drain of young men and women from the countryside to the armed forces and urban munition plants has been allowed to continue until farms are almost completely denuded. That drain has now been officially blocked but as statements from competent farm observers indicate, the move came far too late to prevent serious injury.

To assure even a moderate food supply for our civilian population and our armed forces at home, and to fulfill our export quotas to Great Britain, skilled labor must be diverted back to the farms, and at once.

Bacon, butter, eggs, cheese, beef and milk do not just grow on the farm of their own accord. These foods are manufactured on the farm, from hay, grain and other raw materials, through the medium of livestock. Labor is required every day in the year in this manufacturing.

If we sit around and merely talk about the farm labor shortage until seeding is ready to start next spring, then it will be too late to avert a food shortage. We can avoid that calamity, but we must act at once."

Unjust Punishment

It is shocking to learn that a young woman employed in a Toronto Post Office as a temporary helper during the Christmas rush has been sentenced to three years imprisonment on a charge of stealing letters.

Admitting that the offense is a serious one it is hardly comparable to that of a similar criminal act on the part of a seasoned post office employee who had had a much greater opportunity to become imbued with the responsibility of his position and the seriousness of theft from His Majesty's mails. We wonder whether the young woman actually knew how serious the offense was regarded.

The same comment might be made regarding the teen-aged boy in Oshawa who was found guilty of a similar offense but who fortunately for him was still a juvenile. If he had been a few months older the magistrate would have had no alternative but to send him down for three years.

There should be some basis upon which an appeal could be launched to ameliorate the extreme sentence handed out to the young woman in Toronto or if that procedure is not available then we believe the application should be made for executive clemency. The application of such a severe sentence to young people who are helping out with the Christmas rush of mail and who succumb to temptation, perhaps on the spur of the moment, is not in keeping with British justice or common sense.

Should Seek a Simpler Method

Last week was the deadline for making income tax returns for the quarter ending January 15. The complicated forms with their still more complicated manner in computing taxation, proved a headache for thousands of people, the great majority of whom had to engage legal help to fill in the questions and arrive at the amount of tax.

What is needed is some easier manner of computation, or a printed table indicating the amount an employer has to pay if his net income is so much. Such a table is available for arriving at employees tax. Surely the present difficult method of figuring the tax could be simplified. Many an individual is more worried over how to arrive at the proper amount of taxation, than how they are to save the money to meet the indebtedness.

Sidewalk Troubles Elsewhere

The police have evidently thrown up their hands in Oshawa in their effort to enforce the snow cleaning by-law. So much of the "beautiful" has fallen on the city that sidewalks are away down under. Vacant lots, the Oshawa Times declares editorially, are the worst. We mention this fact for the benefit of our Stouffville rate-payers who have been doing an excellent job on the local walks in view of the great amount of snow to handle this winter.

A visitor from another town informed us recently that their municipality had ceased trying to clean the sidewalks, and folks just made a path through with their feet, or used the roadway.

Even before the snow became heavy, Stouffville made a good showing in providing a reasonable walk for pedestrians for more sanding (or ashing) was done than ever due to a little prompting by the sidewalk inspector and more publicity. It is a good thing to keep the sidewalks safe and the authorities are to be commended in their effort to keep the householders conscious of this effort.

Sunday School Lesson

Lesson for January 24
JESUS THE GREAT PHYSICIAN
 Golden Text—"Whit thou be made whole?"—John 5:6
 The Lesson as a Whole

In the Gospel according to John we have eight miracles recorded. They are called "signs" and are designed to emphasize the divinity and deity of our adorable Lord. Each of them illustrates some great spiritual reality. The first sign is the changing of water into wine (chap. 2:7-11) setting forth the creatorial power of Christ. The healing of the nobleman's son (chap. 4:46-54) presents Him as the Saviour of the children. In the present instance, the healing of the paralytic, we see Him as the One in whom is fullness of power to deliver from the utter helplessness into which sin plunges its victims. For man is not only a lost and guilty sinner, but he is utterly without ability to retrieve his condition or to walk before God in the way of righteousness. All help must come from another who is stronger than he and in whom all virtue and healing are found. The poor, helpless, man at Bethesda was afflicted, in measure at least, because of some sin in his past life. His palsied condition had been brought about, apparently, through some evil behavior or excess, otherwise one can scarcely think of the Lord warning him in the way He did when He said, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." There are sicknesses that are the direct result of sin, but it would be a great mistake to suppose that this is always the case. Sickness may be the effect of overstrain, as in the case of Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25-30) or as a means of preventing possible failure, as in the instance of Paul's physical ailment (2 Cor. 12:7). These bodies of ours are subject to all the ills that flesh is heir to (Eccles. 8:14; 9:11), but when sickness comes, the Christian should seek to learn from it whatever lesson God has for Him, accepting it as part of the divine discipline or chastening (Heb. 12:5-11). The Lord Jesus is the Great Physician and we are entitled to come to Him for physical healing, in accordance with His holy will.

Verse 2—"A pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda." This, we are told, was located near to the Sheep Gate (rather than market), and the name means "House of mercy."

Verse 3—"A great multitude of impotent folk." In the five porches of Bethesda there were gathered a great group of distressed invalids, each hoping his turn would come to avail himself of the relief when the waters were troubled.

Verse 4—"Whosoever then first stepped in was made whole." It was deliverance for those who needed it least. The strongest could press to the pool while the weaker ones were thrust back.

Verse 5—"A certain man . . . which had an infirmity thirty and eight years." Long before the Saviour came to earth, this man's illness began. At last, the set time had come for his relief.

Verse 6—"Will thou be made whole?" The question was direct and simple, and the same question comes to every needy soul. The great Healer is waiting to manifest His power on behalf of those who are ready to be healed.

Verse 7—"Sir, I have no man." Not realizing who it was that had so definitely inquired concerning his desire to be made whole, the palsied man thought only of being helped into the pool, and as he had no friend interested enough to assist him, he felt his case was hopeless.

Verse 8—"Rise, take up thy bed, and walk!" The command of the Lord produced faith in the sick one's heart. There was that about the words of Jesus that led the hearer to

THE OLD HOME TOWN By STANLEY



definite action.

Verse 9—"Immediately the man was made whole . . . the same day was the sabbath." As he acted upon the words of Jesus, new life entered his withered limbs, and he who had been helpless for so long sprang to his feet, a well man. One would have supposed everyone who saw what had taken place would have rejoiced because of so great a manifestation of divine power. But the narrow, bigoted legalists, who were looking on, remembered it was the holy Sabbath Day, and so engrossed were they with the letter of the law and their own human traditions added to it, they could not imagine God thus showing mercy to the poor cripple on His sacred day.

Verse 10—"The Jews . . . said . . . It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." The law forbade labor on the Sabbath, and as Nehemiah had forbidden the Tyrean merchants and their customers to bear burdens on that day (Neh. 13:19), there had grown up a great body of rules and regulations regarding the size and weight of articles that might lawfully be carried by the faithful at that time. To these Jewish legalists an punctilious observance of the rules and traditions of the elders was far more important than the relief of human suffering.

Verse 11—"He that made me whole . . . said . . . Take up thy bed and walk." The man's answer to their faultfinding was definite and based on logical reasoning. If Jesus had power to heal his body, He had the authority to command his obedience.

Verse 12—"What man is that . . . ?" Whether actually ignorant or not of the name of the great Healer, they challenged the man who was carrying his bed to give his deliverer's name, that they might accuse Him.

Verse 13—"He that was healed wist not who it was." Actually, Jesus had not made Himself known by name to the one He had benefited. And He had mingled with the crowd so that His presence was not readily discerned.

Verse 14—"Afterwards Jesus findeth him in the temple." Who can doubt, but that a sense of gratitude to God for his renewed strength had drawn the man to the house of the Lord, where Jesus found him again, and gave a word of warning, saying, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." This makes it evident that the man's long illness had some connection with sin previously committed. He was warned to be careful in the future and not to turn the grace of God into lasciviousness (Jude 4). When God deals with us in grace, we are not to abuse His loving kindness, nor to presume upon its continuance if we walk after the flesh (Gal. 5:13).

Verse 15—"The man . . . told the Jews that it was Jesus." Revealing the name of his benefactor to

those who found fault with him for carrying his bed, he perhaps hoped that they would turn to Him also.

Verse 16—"The Jews . . . sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day." With terrible malignancy, these men, who made their boast in the Law, would have destroyed Him who came to fulfill the Law and the prophets, had they been permitted to do so.

Verse 17—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." God's rest after the work of creation was finished had soon been broken because of man's sin, and He had never kept a sabbath of perfect freedom from service to mankind since. As the Father thus wrought, so the Son was constantly occupied in repairing sin's ravages. For Him there could be no true sabbath rest from toil and labor until the work of redemption was accomplished.



Cpl. C. W. Shaddock, Ingersoll, Ontario, one of the rugged fighting men selected to form the nucleus of the first Canadian paratroops unit. The men, who have recently completed their course at the big U.S. Army School at Fort Benning, Ga., will serve as instructors for Canadian paratroops.

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Reeve Contender for High Office
 Reeve A. E. Weldon of Stouffville is a candidate for the office of York County Road Commissioner, which will be decided as this paper is being put through the press this Wednesday afternoon. Next to the warden there are two top ranking officials in the county and they are the two county commissioners. If Reeve Weldon is successful in being elected to one of these offices, he is to be congratulated.

In all its 76 years of existence the village we believe was never accorded such a commissionership, hence the honor is to be more appreciated because it is so hard to get in the smaller places.

County Commissioners who act with the warden are elected by ballot unless they happen to be accorded an acclamation.

The News Spreads
 The tales that are told of the rural telephone are many and amusing, but this one, from a recent issue of the Chesley Enterprise, is a fair indication of how news travels via the party line: "Next to the Enterprise, the best place to advertise is on the rural telephone, says a local merchant. He tells us that raisins have been a scarce commodity, but he got in a shipment. One day a farm woman, in placing her order for groceries, inquired if he had any raisins. He said he had, so she told him to include a pound in her order. Within five minutes after she had hung up, half a dozen other women on the same line called up and ordered raisins.