

"GETTING THE BIG IDEA FIXED."

The International Sunday-school Lesson For December 9th is "Ezra And Nehemiah Teach the Law."—Nehemiah, Chap. 8
By William T. Ellis.

In a conversation congress held in the South one man made the point that it is better to get the great idea of conservation, or what another called the principle of salvation, into people's minds than to teach them all the methods of conservations extant. Plans are merely the product of a purpose. Methods are the output of a motive. Get the big idea into a people's thinking and they may be trusted to find all the practical outworkings of it that are necessary. The best programme of moral and national reform is a passion for righteousness; details will take care of themselves.

When one of China's greatest statesmen told me that he felt that his nation needs to adopt Christianity, he did not have in mind any complete system of theology; he does not know anything about scientific theology. But he did see clearly that the Christian ideal, and the Christian spirit, are China's present needs. Give China the Book, and let her people grasp its genius, and she will make port in her troubled venture of a constitutional form of government. Give her only the forms and methods of constitutionalism, with the old individualistic and selfish spirit, and she will make shipwreck of her great experiment. The clear need of China, as of our own land, is for a

CHILDREN HAD WHOOPING COUGH

Whooping cough, although specially a disease of childhood, is by no means confined to that period, but may occur at any time of life. It is one of the most dangerous diseases of infancy, and yearly causes more deaths than scarlet fever, typhoid or diphtheria, and is more common in female than male children.

Whooping cough starts with sneezing, watering of the eyes, irritation of the throat, feverishness and cough. The coughing attacks occur frequently, but are generally more severe at night.

On the first sign of a "whoop" Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup should be administered, as it helps to clear the bronchial tubes of the collected mucus and phlegm.

Mrs. George Cooper, Bloomfield, Ont., writes: "It is with pleasure I can write and tell you that there never was a better cough medicine made than Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup. Our children had whooping cough last winter, and that is the only thing that seemed to help them. It loosens up the phlegm so that they could raise it easily. I will never be without it."

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new life to vitalize the new forms of this changing day.

Better Than Strong Walls.
The Great Wall of North China, or the walls about Peking and Nanking, are not any more obsolete and ineffective for purposes of defence in these modern times than were the newly-built walls of Nehemiah to keep out the most dangerous foes of Jerusalem. They might thwart Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem, but they were unavailing against the selfishness, pride, idolatry and godlessness of the wandering hearts of the Jews. The need of the returned Jews was for the protection that would save them from themselves. What says Amos R. Wells?—

"Closer is the Lord's protection, than a near investing wall;
Closer than a moat about me, closer than a tower tall;
Closer than a suit of armor, or my hands and feet can be;
For against mine own assailing, His protection keepeth me."

The Jews who had returned from the Babylonian exile were in a capital position to adopt an eclectic religion; and they had leaning that way. They were surrounded by an assortment of creeds. There were more gods than virtues. Most of the popular divinities were easy-going, asking nothing of their devotees in the way of moral strictness. There was free rein for all passions in the service of the gods of the nations. That is why the Jews were so often tempted to stray from Jehovah. A man is glad to cloak the indulgence of his frailties under the cover of some religion.

The popularity of all sorts of cults in our own time is to be explained in this same way. Their moral obligations are not rigid and exacting. They profess scorn of the old legalism of the Mosaic law. "Natural religion," is a veritable high-brow fad in our times. It is an easy creed. It will let a man indulge his selfishness to any extent, so long as he is mindful to burn incense to the goddess of Good Form. Be polite and conventional, and you may do whatever you please within these wide bounds, says natural religion, which defies the worst as well as the best of man's nature.

Leaders, Real and Sham.
Sir Robertson Nicoll, the great British editor and critic, once gave me his impression of certain public men on this side of the water. Concerning one famous man he said that "He manages to keep just a step in front of the crowd, and he is ever looking back over his shoulder to see if they are following." That is a definition of many a popular politician; but the term "leader" must be denied him. The truly great statesman is the one who leads the way to

what he believes to be righteousness and honor and public welfare. He is less concerned about people's applause than about their progress.

Fortunately, Jerusalem had that kind of leaders during and after the rebuilding of the walls. Nehemiah and Ezra cared more for helping their people than for pleasing them. They never hesitated to point out the dangers which resided in the hearts of the Jews, as well as those which arose from without the city walls. They were true leaders, not followers of the crowd who managed like small boys running at the head of a circus parade.

Once the wall was finished, these leaders planned for a great festival of recognition of the law of the nation, which was the law of Jehovah. It is the degree of a community's reverence for law that measures its real stability. A common misapprehension is that it is the volume of business that determines a community's strength; but this is not so. The strength of the law is the strength of a people's civilization. Not without reason does the British poet of empire cry to his far-flung fellow countrymen:

"Keep ye the law; be swift in all obedience;
Drive the road and bridge the ford.
Make ye sure to each his own."

WHILE AT WAR Women Suffer at Home

Toronto, Ont.—"I consider Doctor Pierce's Favorite Prescription the very best of woman's tonics. I suffered a severe nervous breakdown. I could not sleep, was weak and tired all the time. I took the 'Prescription' and just a few bottles completely built me up and relieved me of my nervous condition. It is a good medicine and I am glad to recommend it.—Mrs. ALFRED SHEPARD, 259 Seaton St., Niagara Falls, Ont.—"I can safely say that 'Favorite Prescription' did me a lot of good. I at one time developed woman's trouble; my nerves were completely shattered, and I became weak. I had severe backache and pains in my side, extending down into my limbs. I doctored, but did not get relieved of my ailment and was down and out when I began taking Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, and it so completely cured me and restored me to health and strength that I was able to do all my own work and others besides. I do recommend 'Favorite Prescription' to weak and ailing women; they cannot get a better medicine."—Mrs. JOHN LOCKHART, 26 Terrace Ave.

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That he reap where he hath sown; By the peace among our peoples let men know we serve the Lord."

A Get-Together Meeting.
Many cities in the Southern and Western parts of the United States, have entered upon a regular campaign of advertising and promotion. They have adopted slogans and emblems, and assiduously woo increased prosperity. The first step in every such campaign is to get the people together, and to make them feel their civic solidarity. No committee of business men can boom a city successfully, unless there be present the genuinely unified community consciousness.

Ezra had never studied psychology, but he knew human nature, which is the same thing, so his first step, in the great religious and law-observing revival which he projected for Jerusalem, was to get all the people together in one place. He wanted them to see one another, and to feel the thrill of the "elbow touch" of which old soldiers talk. Into the broad place before the water gate the whole assembly of the people gather. Wise is the church which holds reunions and socials, not for money-making purposes, but solely to promote his self-realization of the organization.

The churches which expect to have crowds of worshippers merely by the fact of opening their doors, may take a lesson from Ezra's procedure. He was Ezra, the great leader, and all the people had special reason to give heed to his words, but he organized and planned for this rally as thoroughly as churches make ready for a Billy Sunday campaign. It was not a one-man meeting; Ezra had with him corps of assistants, judiciously placed. He was after results, and not after a reputation for himself. The occasion was a prepared one, an anticipated one, and an enthusiastic

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one, for the "get together" spirit had hold of the people.

"And Gave the Sense."
A man was speaking upon the possibilities of Mesopotamia's cotton crop, but he took it for granted that his hearers were more familiar with geography than was the case, so he was surprised when a friend said to him, "A man was telling me about your speech, upon the possibilities of cotton in China." The speaker had not been careful to make his hearers understand, which is as truly the speaker's responsibility as it is the listener's. Most persons listen to the
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