

THE ELON COLLEGE WEEKLY

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IMPORTANT.

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A CALL FOR CHARACTER.

There is a great call for character among the young men of today. Originally these words, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," were a call for character in a great crisis. An earnest man who met God in the wilderness brought this message to his countrymen. The people, day after day, would flock to the wild gorge of the Jordan river to meet him. They brought with them food enough to last them while they stayed to hear him deliver his great message. Occasionally large crowds of them would go with this prophet down into the deeper channel of the valley and there they prayed to God to forgive their sins. This call which the prophet was speaking to them about, so thrilled their hearts that it was a warning and a promise to them. It caused many to change their lives, because they realized that the kingdom of God was at hand.

This crisis that, "The kingdom of God is at hand," formerly meant that God was about to show himself and His will for the life of men in the personality of the Messiah. This God did in the personality of Jesus, the Christ. Since those early days it has become evident that Jesus Christ is a living personality continuing to enforce His revelation of God and of God's will for the life of men. One marvelous feature of Jesus Christ was His quiet consciousness that He would never be without influence in the world. So when He left the world, He said, "I shall leave you and the world shall no longer see me; but I shall be with you and you shall be made feel that I am with you and that I love you." I do not believe that there have ever been any men or women, through their own experiences, who have not found this to be true. His power which brought such health and cheer to the sick bodies and sore hearts of Galilee has never ceased to make its presence felt among living men.

Christ helps us to secure a progressive understanding of God, and more than that, He helps us to see more clearly what the kingdom of God means. You remember, perhaps, the verse, "Many things have I

yet to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." From this, men are being led in to a clearer realization of what is involved in the historical revelation of God and His will for the life of men made two thousand years ago.

The crisis of today is due to the fact that sociological conditions have brought men of widely different classes into close relationship to with each other. The world has never before, in such a short time, experienced changes comparable with those that have occurred in the last few decades. Men have been forced into such close contact that the welfare of each depends upon the conduct of others to a degree hitherto unknown. Men have been forced together geographically. A man, without rising from his office chair may, in a few moments, through telegraph, telephone, and cable, interchange thought with a man on the other side of the earth. So it is, that men are being drawn together industrially and socially. Now as to whether this is for the best interest of our country or not, it is hard to decide. Perhaps the result of crowding men so close together may be that they will fall upon each other in deadly hatred or that they will be bound together with ties of mutual respect and good will. If they come together only to hate each other, they will fall apart, and civilization will fall to a degree from which it cannot come again to the present point for many centuries. What the outcome of the present crisis shall be depends upon one thing, namely, the character of the men concerned in the crisis.

The present crisis then, constitutes a call for character. The old words ring out with new meaning: "Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Change your lives, for God's new order is coming swiftly on.

Now the question arises as to what kind of character is called for by the present crisis. What kind of men does Jesus Christ need to thrust out into the thick of life, where great issues are being wrought out? He calls for men who will let him train them for the crisis. They must be men who, consciously or unconsciously are His disciples and who by the laws of personal association are becoming like Him in the fundamental qualities of His character. Therefore, if they should become more like Christ in character, they would have to possess truth and grace. So it appears to me that this call is to students and teachers mainly. However, we find sometimes that there are a few students whom this call does not apply to. They are the ones who cheat in the classroom while on recitation or examination. The student who will do this is cultivating a disposition that will lead him to do the same kind of thing in a bank or elsewhere.

The call is for honest men who do not lead a double life—one life at home and in respectable society, another in places which they secretly visit; men who are the same by day and by night. Someone has said, "Character is what a man is in the dark." I certainly believe this is true. The crisis of today demands men who will employ no method in their profession which they would not be willing to have the public know. It also calls for men who are willing to help their fellowmen. As some poet has said,

"Let me live in a house by the side of the road,

Where the race of men go by—
The men that are good and the men that are bad.

As good and as bad as I;
I would not sit in the scorner's seat, or
hurl the cynic's ban;
Let me live in a house by the side of the road

And be a friend to man."

This call to character comes with special force to the present college generation. There are men living quietly in college today who ten years from now will be manufacturers, teachers, ministers, and lawyers. They will be able to do something of far-reaching influence in the crisis that is on. What they will do ten years from now may largely be determined by what they are thinking, resolving, and doing now. We understand that no man gets ready for an emergency in a minute. Responsibilities come quickly upon young men today. Therefore college men must get ready now. The great call for character sounds out in the lecture room, the dormitory, the gymnasium, and on the athletic field. So now is the time to take orders from Christ

Then follow Him wherever He leads you later. It matters not where it may be, if it is in South America, China, or the wilds of Africa, go.

F. F. Myrick.

SYMBOLICAL AND NATIONAL FLOWERS.

The use of flowers as symbols began in very early times, and has continued to the present day among nearly all nations. Biblical literature contains many allusions to floral symbols and remnants of a floral language are said to exist among all the Oriental nations.

China, the "Flowery Kingdom," whose chronicles are said to antedate the historic records of all other nations, once possessed a complete floral alphabet, and at the present day the Chinese make a lavish use of flowers in many of their public occasions. Flowers appear wrought in fabrics, outlined on wares and in various other forms of decorations. In the ornamentation and beautifying of their gardens the Chinese are said to excel all other nations. The monuments of Egypt and Assyria also have upon their surfaces a code of floral calligraphy whose meaning can be but dimly guessed in the present age. In these inscriptions the sacred lily plays a prominent part, and is a sacred flower among nearly all Oriental nations. In Egypt it was consecrated to the gods, and became in time the national emblem. The lotus grows no longer on the banks of the Nile, but it is still seen carved upon the ancient temples, and is still a sacred blossom. It is recorded that the love of flowers was carried to such an extent in Egypt that Amasis, a private soldier, became general of the armies of King Portonis for having presented him with a crown of flowers.

Undoubtedly the pure system of floral calligraphy came to Europe from Egypt.

India whose civilization had attained its full vigor when Greece was in her infancy, has in her magnificent flora a beautiful and wonderful field for poetical genius, while among the Hindoos distinguished strangers are welcomed with garlands of flowers as tokens of hospitality, and the shrines of

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their favorite deities are decorated with these lovely emblems.

In Persia a yearly festival is held called the "Feast of roses," which lasts as long as the roses bloom. The literatures and languages of the Hindoo, Turkish, Persian and Malayan races, when closely scrutinized abound in floral symbols. In the Malayan tongue the same word is employed to express the idea of women and flowers. The so-called Turkish "language of flowers" was first popularized in France and England through the writings of M. La Montraie and Lady MaryWorthy Montague respectively. In Japan the lotus is a symbol of purity. They picture their deity reclining upon the leaf of a water lily, or lotus, while the Chrysanthemum or "golden flower" popularly called the "Land of Chrysanthemums" is their national emblem. The Greeks not only seem to have entertained the most passionate love for flowers, but to have adopted them as typical of every interesting occurrence, public or private. The Athenian Greeks chose the violet as their national emblem. In Athens a bunch of hawthorn embellished every door way on May morning, a custom originating in the spring rites paid by the heathen to Flora. In the Iberian peninsula flora symbolism has assumed a superstitious tinge; and is principally indebted to Roman Catholic legends for the little vitality it there has. In France the language of flowers has many votaries and a lavish use is made of flowers in public ceremonies, and as a means of expressing the various sentiments of this frivolous people. The national emblem of England, the rose, is of historic interest. It has been termed the "flower of flowers." The ancients regarded it as the emblem of silence, also of love and joy.

The United States cannot be said to have a generally accepted national flower. In 1889, an attempt was made to secure a general expression of opinion in favor of some one flower, and the golden rod, as being widely distributed, received perhaps the majority of the suffrages, but a national flower is usually recognized only when tradition and legend give it significance, and not because of a popular vote. The expression of opinion called forth by this movement, in many instances showed a misconception in the meaning of the term "national" and an amusing ignorance of our native plants. In the case of dwellers in cities who rarely see a wild flower, the choice