

INEFFICIENT AND UNREADY

The International Sunday School Lesson for February 20 is: "The Wise and the Foolish Virgins."—Matt. 25:1-13.

By WILLIAM T. ELLIS

General inefficiency is a greater peril to our day than some other evils against which organized societies and movements wage war. Any busy man anywhere can heap up stories like the following: A negro laborer does odd jobs about my house; a week ago he was to appear on a given day to clean the cellar and carry out ashes. He did not come as stipulated; he never does when expected; no do any of the substitutes we have tried in his place. After a few days, I called up the superintendent of the bureau at the college, and asked for two boys for out-of-door work. I was definitely promised a report within a few hours as to whom the boys would come. I am still waiting for the report, and for the boys! For your college student is quite as irresponsible as your negro casual laborer.

Both are little worse than a multitude of employed men and women. A week ago I urgently wanted 300 China famine information pamphlets, for an uncommonly important purpose. After repeated telephonings and promises, I got large posters! After still further telephonings and promises, I got further assurances—but I am still waiting for the pamphlets; and China is dying at the rate of 10,000 a day.

These are merely near-at-hand and familiar illustrations, such as most persons could duplicate in their daily experience, of the grave prevalence of inefficiency, which menaces the warp and woof of our social fabric. What avails it to teach the boys and girls philosophy and history and mathematics if we are not also teaching them to be reliable and effective in the daily round of ordinary life? Why dress the wedding attendants in best array, carrying silver lamps, if they have no oil for the hour of need?

Practical beyond words is this Lesson Parable of the wise and foolish virgins at the wedding feast. Before we pass to its spiritual symbolism, let us hold of the surface teaching of simple, obvious preparedness. The charge is being made against more than one muddling generation that it is unprepared for peace as it was unprepared for war. It came up to great hours of duty and opportunity with empty lamps.

Broadly surveying our present time of crisis, one may soberly be written that the world's leadership in statecraft, economics, industry, education and religion, is not making ready for the era upon which mankind enters—of opportunity and obscurantism, of the seats of authority. "Forward-looking" men and women seem rare in the high places. The great bulk of common folk are more aware of their own responsibilities than they are of those whose business it should be to direct the signs of the times.

A friend, who is one of the real business men in the affairs of the kingdom of God, told me that he has just returned from an international interdenominational meeting of missionary of- ficials where he heard no word con- cerning the present crisis, no proph- esies to new duties, no concern for war-torn conditions. Routine organi- zational matters chiefly occupied the time of the meeting. That an hour of preparation is demanded for all the world at no time appeared throughout the meeting. The delegates carried empty lamps.

Business With Empty Lamps
Every message that comes from the East tells terrible stories of the plight of the Russian refugees. Aris- tocratic ladies landed in the Gallipoli mud in the same satin slippers in which they had danced away the night before the evacuation of Crimea. De- spite the grimness of warnings, the Russian anti-Bolshevik supporters in the East were unprepared for flight; their suffering baffles our under- standing.

In a still larger sense these Rus- sian bourgeoisie are unready; they do not know how to take care of them- selves in even the simplest ways. Their spirit is brave and optimistic, but the least of the Armenian peas- ants was better able to shift for him- self during the darkest days than these high Russian officers and their fam- ilies. The particular blackness of the outlook of the Russian aristocracy needs no illustration in being unfit for the emergencies of a stern world. Let all these incidents but echo the les- son's primary warning. It is a word that comes with peculiar solemnity to teachers and students. To be ready and able for life, and whatever it may bring, is the only reasonable attitude of our day. Old-fashioned pioneer effi- ciency and self-reliance, which made nations out of this North Amer- ican wilderness, are qualities suppre- ssed in our slack and careless times. Too many of us are more inter- ested in the pay envelope than in the work that the swarm of place- hunters swooping down upon the new Administration at Washington is simp-

COLONEL HOUSE IS WRITING PEACE CONFERENCE HISTORY

NEW YORK, Feb. 12.—Col. Edward M. House, representative of the Wilson administration throughout the war and United States commissioner to the Paris peace conference, is assembling the manuscript of a book entitled "What Really Happened at Paris; the Story of the Peace Conference, 1919," which is shortly to be published by Charles Scribner's Sons, that firm announced here today.

The book will include contributions by other American delegates who partici- pated in the treaty making at Ver- sailles, namely, Charles H. Haskins, chief of division of western Europe; Robert H. Lord, chief of Polish di- vision; Douglas Johnson, chief of division of boundaries; Charles Seymour, chief of Austro-Hungarian division; Isalah Bowman, chief territorial ad- viser; Thomas W. Lamont, and Allyn A. Young, economic advisers; Samuel Gompers, chairman, commission on in- ternational labor legislation; Herbert C. Hoover, director general of relief; James Brown Scott and David Hunter Miller, legal advisers; Gen. Tasker H. Bliss and Admiral Henry T. Mayo.

Colonel House's own contributions to the work will treat of preparations for peace, the story of the armistice and fundamentals of the peace, while the other delegates will include in their subjects the trial of the Kaiser, the new boundaries of Germany, the new Poland, the story of Piuma, repa- rations, the feeding of Europe, disarm- arment and the labor clauses of the treaties.

Mr. Seymour, who is professor of history at Yale, is assisting Colonel House in editing the papers for the forthcoming volume.

SELF-LOCKING WING-NUTS
Wing nuts which are used to hold down the hoods of certain motor cars may be prevented from working loose in the following way: Holding the nut in a vise, file it so as to leave a raised portion or ridge across its face. This ridge will drop into the slot in the bent ear and prevent the nut from shaking loose. The ridge should be about 1-32-inch high and there should be no sharp corners.—In Motor for February.

were both less than forty-seven years old when inaugurated.

WOMEN SEEK TO ELIMINATE INEQUALITIES IN STATES
WASHINGTON, Feb. 12.—Efforts to reach an agreement on widely difficult plans to remove what are described as inequalities and discriminations still existing in many states against women, possibly through the creation of an entirely new national organization, will be made by the woman's party at its annual convention which begins here Wednesday.

Delegates declare that while the main object for which the party was organized—national woman suffrage—has been attained the victory is not yet complete. Some leaders propose to continue to depend upon obtaining national legislation favorable to their cause by "holding the party in power responsible," and arousing interest in women's legislation among the con- stituents of members of congress. Others propose more clearly defined political activities in the states, while still others would enter the political arena direct with a full fledged women's party.

The executive committee, the advisory council and the committee of state chairmen will submit the following resolutions concerning the future pro- gram:

"Resolved, That the women here as- sembled now consecrate themselves, the political freedom of women hav- ing been won in the United States, to the maintenance of this freedom, not lost in any international government that is established, and to work for the re- moval of all remaining forms of the sub- jection of women.

"Resolved, That in order to carry out this program the national woman's party disband and a new organization be created.

"Resolved, That in order to promote the object of this organization, it maintain an official magazine.

"Resolved, That the immediate work of the organization shall be the re- moval of the legal disabilities of wom- en."

The "international government" re- ferred to is explained, is the League of Nations, the covenant of which, it is claimed, would deprive women of rights they have won in individual countries. The woman's party objects particularly, leaders declare, to the clause of the league covenant which provides that where a people are vot- ing to determine their future nation- ality "option by husband will cover his wife."

"An official statement issued by the woman's party says that in certain states of the United States married women have no control over their children.

"The children's place of abode," the statement says, "can be fixed by their husbands and the women must vote where their husbands live—a common rule of domicile that is at the bot- tom of the statute forcing upon Amer- ican women who marry foreigners, the nationality of their husbands."

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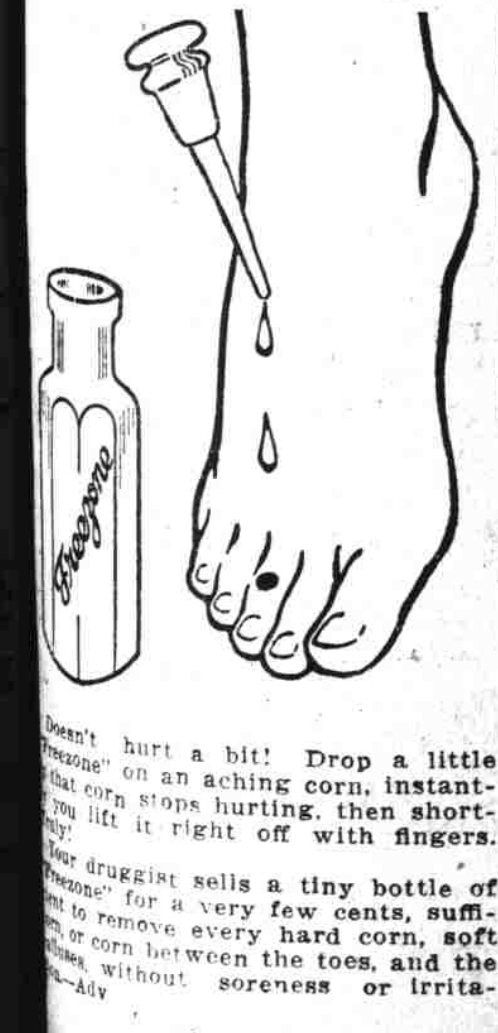


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