

### STUMBLING BLOCKS OR STEPPING STONES; TWO KINDS OF SERVANTS

Some Lives Help and Others Hinder—Unique Doctrine and a Prayer for the Times—International Sunday School Lesson for May 24 "Unprofitable Servants"—Luke 17: 1-10.

(By WILLIAM T. ELLIS.)

Some persons are stumbling blocks and some are stepping stones. Some lives help and others hinder. The seriousness of being the sort of person whose conduct keeps others from being their best, is dealt with in plain speech by Jesus. His teaching is equally as big business, if it is bad business. It audits the saloon-keeper and the mistress who oppresses her servants. It reaches out to the ostentatious rich who put bitterness into the heart of the poor, and the "Christian" homes which give their servants a distaste for religion. The purveyor of suggestive literature or immoral art or dancing entertainment comes squarely within the range of the terrible-attack of the gentle Nazarene.

#### Things Worse Than Death.

"It were well for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were thrown into the sea, rather than that he should offend one of these little ones to stumble." That is terrible. It bolsters the immemorial belief of society in capital punishment. There are some things worse than death. Jesus, who looked forward to a kingdom of social solidarity, included among these, offenses against life and the social order. Whoever hurts people—and especially the weak, the helpless and the defenseless who have no protectors, except the inevitable truth of God—comes within this sweeping condemnation. The sacredness of life and of human welfare—that passion which burns brightest in the noblest breasts of our time—was lighted by One who had Himself been under the shadow of iniquitous political, social and religious conditions. We find Jesus arrayed on the side of all who need.

There is a great deal of talk nowadays about "property rights," and some of it is needed. Every teacher of truth, however, must speak cheerily the judgment that weighed in the scales against the rights of life, the rights of property are incommensurable. Our day sees clearly the worth of human life. In one of its profound papers, "What I Believe and Why"—now running in the Independent—Dr. William Hayes Ward says, in teaching upon the puzzle of infinite space and infinite time, "While I believe there are innumerable inhabited worlds, yet if the earth were the only one of the service to us on this little world of all the radiant heavens would not be unworthy for I believe that an infant's single will is more valuable than the sum of all cosmic forces through all the celestial ages, so much is mind superior to matter."

#### Caring for the Little Ones.

A new and larger and important interpretation of the teaching of Jesus is being given in this generation. There never was such an intense and general solicitude for the "little ones" of life. This is the meaning of the new British law that is changing ancient estates from game preserves for the nobility into small farms for the common folk. The cry of "safety first," which in varied forms is being written into legislation and which holds human life above dividends, is but an echo of this teaching of the Master. Child labor is being driven from the earth even as was slavery, because the Master's mind concerning the "little ones" is becoming world-dominant. The principle is everywhere being accepted, that any business which is not good for all its workers and for all the people, is a bad business, whether it be a cotton mill or a gin mill.

This distinctive principle of the Gospel is in our own time coming to have a national application. It is explanation for America's concern for the welfare of Mexico. President Wilson, at the funeral of the American sailors slain in Vera Cruz, laid down the new extension of this Christian teaching, namely, that a nation may even go to war for the service and help of a needy neighbor. It was this word of Christ that freed the Congo slaves and recently saved the villagers in Armenia from slaughter by the Kurds. It is making world-protest against the intention of certain heathen powers to exploit China. The formal message of the Master is reaching to the social battle cry, "Enough for all and all for each." Whatever hurts the "least of these" offends Jesus Christ and merits his condemnation.

#### Unique Doctrine.

In the budget of utterances of Jesus which make up this Sunday school lesson there are four distinct messages. The first deals with stumbling blocks and helpers. The second touches upon the unique Christian teaching, which differentiates it from other religions, that men should forgive one another. Retaliation was the rule of the world in which Jesus lived. The Mosaic doctrine of "an eye for an eye" works out in the Arab's blood feud and in the ancient world, which still maintains the ideals that were common in Christ's day. But He came bidding men to forgive a penitent brother.

There is no meanness or muddy-mindedness about this. The clear word of Christ is that an impenitent offender is to be rebuked. The preacher or teacher who has no credentials from Christ. But when a brother has repented, then he is to be forgiven. Yes, and forgiven again and again; for the kingdom cannot come—there cannot be a harmonious social order—until the principle of forgiveness and forbearance permeates it. By the forgiveness that we expect of God, Jesus abjures us to forgive our brethren.

#### A Prayer for the Times.

Some persons remember Moody chiefly as the terms of his great sermon on faith, and his voice still echoes in memory as he repeats this passage, "Increase our faith." This is the third message of Christ, set apart for the day's study. It is a timely truth. In the face of materialism, of reckless speculation, of arrogant worldly wisdom, our day needs to pray "Lord, increase our faith." More than we need bigger incomes or lower prices for food or juster laws, we need today an accession of faith in a living God who is ever all and to whom every man is accountable. A nation's spiritual heritage is its greatest asset. The development of the God-ward side of our life will make for real power and

prosperity. A people strong in their hold upon heaven will not fall in meeting the exigencies of their own times.

After All and After All. Men cannot square accounts with God. After his best has been done, he still will not have earned heaven. At the end of all his labors, the man with the clearest vision is ready to pronounce himself, as in this parable, "an unprofitable servant." We are dependent upon the mercy of God. We cannot work our passage to heaven. The heathen try to lay up merit, but even they know that their labor is vain. This passage has been phrased by Polabets notes as "The duty of doing more than our duty." It is at once an exhortation against spiritual pride and self-complacency and a reminder that the goal which we all seek is so far beyond men's power to earn, that it is wholly the gift of the grace of God. The saintliest and most serviceable lives are readiest at the end to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

#### SEVEN SENTENCE SERMONS.

Courtesy costs nothing and buys everything.—Old Proverb.

Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire, called conscience.—George Washington.

Every wish is like a prayer—with God.—E. B. Browning.

And he said unto all, if any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.—Luke 9:23.

Candor is the seal of a noble mind, the ornament and pride of man, the sweetest charm of woman, the scorn of rascals, and the rarest virtue of sensibility.—Bentley-Serran.

Not myself, but the truth that in life I have spoken.

Not myself, but the seed that in life I have sown.

Shall pass on to ages—all about me forgotten.

Save the truth I have spoken, the good I have done.

God never gave a man a thing to do concerning which it were irrelevant to ponder how the Son of God would have done it.—George MacDonald.

Somebody is sure to ask "what of the news from Mexico?" It symbolizes the growth of the spirit of neighborliness which Christ taught in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Mexico sorely needs help. Her national life had become intolerable under the old order, other nations would have passed her by in her plight with a shrug of the shoulders. Christian America has recognized her responsibility for bringing justice, order and common welfare out of the reign of anarchy in the republic below the Rio Grande. As in the case of Cuba, she is willing to wage war, if need be, that peace and righteousness may be brought to pass. All the present turmoil is but the birth-throes of a new national life in Mexico—and a new spirit of mutual understanding and fellowship among all the nations in this western world.

The historian Bancroft once said, "It is when the hour of conflict is over that history comes to a right understanding of the strife, and is ready to exclaim, 'Lo! God's here and we know it not.'"

### HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS OF N. C. ARE CLASSIFIED

Summary of Work and Purposes of N. C. Historical Commission Prepared.

Secretary H. D. W. Connor, of the North Carolina Historical Commission, has prepared and forwarded to P. P. Claxton, commissioner of the United States Bureau of Education, at his special request, a most interesting and comprehensive summary of the purposes and achievements of the commission which has come to be a most important department of state, illustrative of a new phase of educational work which has been particularly marked for some years. Admirably quartered in the new \$300,000 fire proof building, the commission has the entire second floor. Secretary Connor makes an interesting presentation of the present proportions and scope of the work. The state archives of which the commission has charge run back twenty-five years to the early colonial days. They are intact from the organization of the state government in 1777 to the present time, embracing tens of thousands of documents of the various state departments, few people as yet realizing the extent and richness of these archives. They are being classified now by competent clerks so as to be most accessible to historical students.

There are personal letters and documents of priceless value given or loaned to the state that the commission is classifying and putting in permanent and accessible condition. The commission is really accomplishing a very great public service that is more and more appreciated as the work extends and observed.

#### Men and Women and Love.

Bwedenborg once observed that woman seeks in man something good which she really loves as true, as an expression of wisdom; the man, on the other side, seeks in woman something good which he really loves as beautiful.

### THE REFORMED CHURCH MAKES SURVEY OF SELF

Four Commissioners Examine Into it With View to Greater Efficiency.

#### NEW IDEA IN RELIGION

(By RELIGIOUS RAMBLER.)

One more "first" thing in American church life is the survey of its own organization and activity, which has been made by the Reformed church in the United States and presented to the general synod now in session in Lancaster. This very modern document is a fitting celebration of the golden jubilee of the Reformed church.

While, so far as I am aware, no other denomination has systematically made a comprehensive study of its own life and work, the plan is not wholly original, being borrowed from the World's Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. Four commissions have been at work since last August seeking exact knowledge concerning the denomination and putting all of its affairs—general and particular—under review. The result is a body of information that will result in more changes of method and more internal reforms than could have been effected by years of oratory.

The German Reformed church, as it is commonly called, is made up of the sort of hard-headed people to whom an investigation of facts would particularly appeal. The plan originated with their laymen's Missionary Movement. Originally it was meant as a study of the church's foreign missionary responsibility.

The 32 men who made up the four commissions comprise both laymen and ministers. They divided their work into the four departments: The World Task of Denomination; the Membership and Distribution of the Denomination; the History, Organization and Administration of the Denominational Work and, fourth, the Material Resources of the Denomination with plans for financing the Church Work.

The scientific spirit in religious administration could scarcely go farther than this new plan, now quite generally adopted among the denominations, of assuming a definite proportion of the world's non-Christian population, for which the denomination agrees to be responsible, providing all the agencies that may be necessary for its evangelization.

The first of these four commissions take the whole world under review and it passes on the judgment that the German Reformed church is responsible for 10,000,000 heathens. Their particular share are 3,500,000 Japanese, 3,500,000 Chinese and 3,000,000 Mohammedans. The church is already conducting missions in Japan, spending \$80,000 annually. Its Chinese work should be extended, the commission finds to an expenditure of \$300,000 annually.

No work is at present to be conducted in the Mohammedan world by this church, and the experts recommend that it assume responsibility for a part of the Sunday school effort to help stem the victorious progress of Islam southward in Africa. At the present time the average of gifts for foreign missions in the denomination is 33 cents a year per member.

Within the field of home missions the commission accepts responsibility for a large number of German immigrants into P. U. S. and Canada, for 125,000 Hungarians, for 125,000 Bohemians and for 15,000 Japanese on the Pacific coast. It agrees to share with other denominations of the Presbyterian group responsibility for 4,000,000 negroes. At present \$200,000 a year are being spent for home missions, and an annual tenfold increase is desired.

There are a national church is the rather cautious finding of the commission. It has found that the membership is not 2,071,193, with 1,247,000 scattered all over the United States and Canada. Formerly the denomination centered in Pennsylvania and the regions contiguous. A series of maps have been prepared by the second commission, giving the distribution of the church membership. Such defects as overlapping synods and classes have been discovered and remedies suggested.

While there are 1,275 congregations in the Reformed church, there are only 1,056 charges, which means that nearly half of the pastors serve more than one church. Six hundred and sixty of the charges, however, have only one congregation. Those contain 60 per cent of the denomination. In 273 cases the congregations are united with the Lutherans in the ownership of the church building. That the denomination is steadily becoming more and more Americanized is shown by the figures. Only 229 use German exclusively in their services, while 459 congregations employ both German and English. One thousand and seventy-three use English alone.

The question of vacant churches is dealt with vigorously. The average salary of the 111 vacant churches is found to be only \$97. The commission points out that one church of 12 members offers a salary of \$500 to a pastor, but last year raised only \$75. The amalgamation of the weaker congregations with churches of other denominations is frankly urged.

What the organization of the Reformed church in the United States is, and how it works is the theme of a scholarly historical review under the third commission. Its history and relationships. The whole scheme of ecclesiastical government is taken up and the entire system of judicatories, boards, societies, educational institutions and homes is passed in careful review.

One gets a new idea of the magnitude of the mechanics of a religious denomination through this survey.

It takes money and a great deal of it to run a religious denomination. Aside from the local expenses of each congregation, of which the pastor's salary is usually the chief item, the Reformed church needs half a million dollars a year to run its benevolent work, or an average of \$1.00 per capita.

The denominational budgets, congregational budgets, methods of money raising, the importance of increasing the pastor's salaries, and the usual related financial matters are definitely treated.

## New Line JAPANESE GOODS New Line

Stock just in—bought below market price at a foreclosed sale of a Japanese store. I have returned from northern markets with a new line—THREE THOUSAND dollars worth of Japanese Goods:

Such as

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| TEAKWOOD CHAIRS    | JAPANESE LAMPS  |
| NOVELTIES          | SERVING BASKETS |
| TEA SETS           | TEA POTS        |
| DINNER GONGS       | JARDINERES      |
| JAP BAMBOO LAMPS   | BAKING DISHES   |
| CASSAROLE          | CANDELABRA      |
| JAPANESE LANTERNS  | BRASS BOWLS     |
| BRASS GOODS        | ELECTROLIERS    |
| SERVING TRAYS      | BREAD TRAYS     |
| COFFEE POTS        | VASES           |
| DINNER CHIMES      | PLATTERS        |
| BAMBOO BASKETS     | CHAFING DISHES  |
| CANDLE STICKS      | FERN DISHES     |
| JAPANESE UMBRELLAS | SMOKING SETS    |

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### CHINESE PIRATES PLUNDER VESSEL

Ordinary Acts of Piracy Are Eclipsed by Looting of Steamship Childar.

BOLDNESS RECALLS ADVENTURES OF KIDD

Fifty Pirates Shipped as Deck Passengers and Took Officers of Vessel Unaware.

Canton, China, May 21.—Ordinary acts of piracy, which occur frequently in the rivers and canals in this section—were completely eclipsed recently when the Norwegian steamship Childar was plundered on the high seas.

It was bold enough to recall to the western world the days of Captain Kidd, 200 years ago, and it was a rare case even for these waters.

The number of foreign warships constantly cruising up and down the China coast and the fact that many of the merchant ships carry rifles and ammunition generally deter the Chinese from such acts of boldness, for they are given short shrift when caught. In the early days of the British settlement at Hongkong scores of pirate junks were captured and sunk; there are records of forty and fifty being sent to the bottom in a day. The Childar was captured in a very simple way. About fifty pirates went aboard the ship at Hongkong as ordinary deck passengers, and were bound for places up the coast. They being altogether 200 Chinese making the journey, no notice was taken of them.

They were evidently a little nervous over the enterprise, and soon roused the suspicions of the bound Chinese passengers by their restlessness and earnest conversations in little groups. Seeing that they were being watched they put their plans into execution, but with complete success.

About forty miles out of Hongkong they whipped out their revolvers and rushed the officers. There were six white officers, and none of them were armed or within the reach of weapons. The second officer, who was on the bridge, tried to give the alarm to the others below and was promptly laid senseless with the butt of a pistol. Otherwise no bodily injury was done.

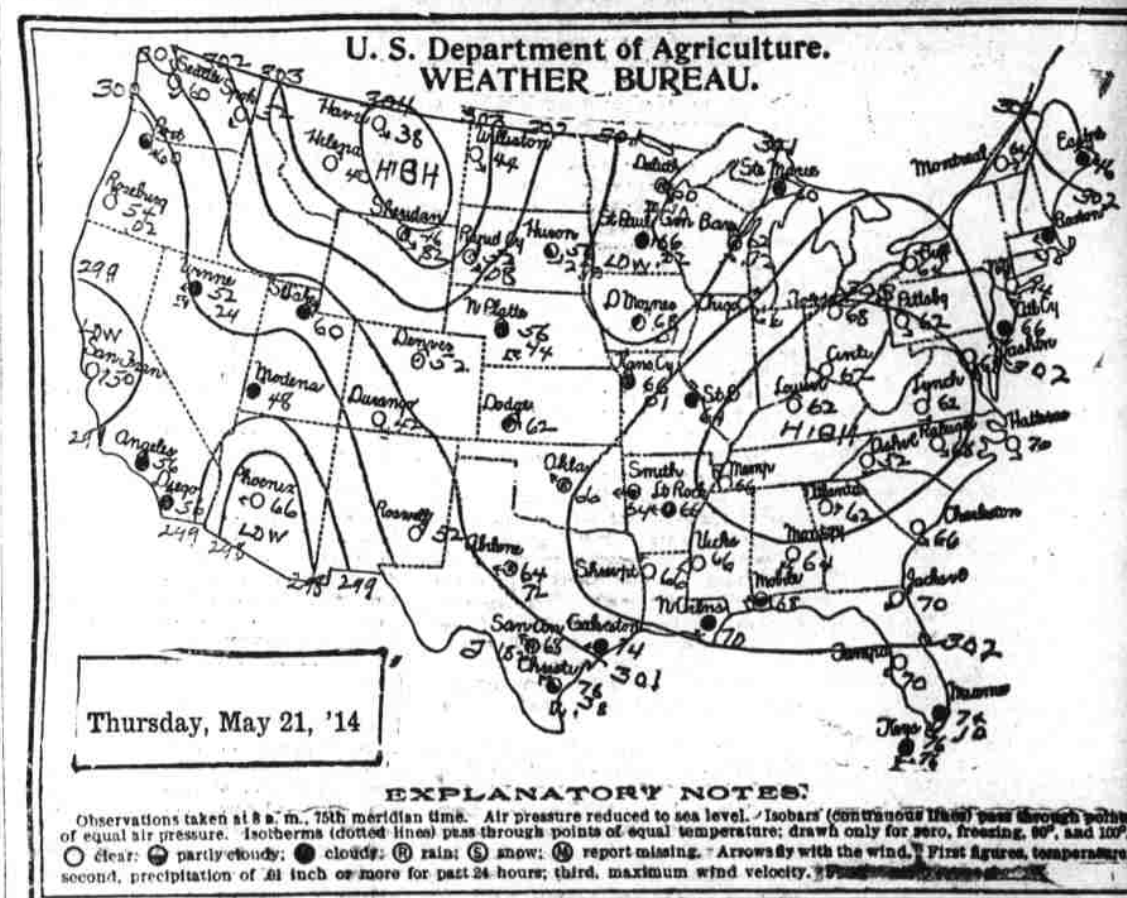
On their arms, so that they should know one another, the pirates wore white bands similar to those worn by the Chinese revolutionists two years ago. There were characters on the bands, the translation of which is said to be "money comes easy."

Four of the officers were tightly bound and placed in the auxiliary wheelhouse at the stern of the ship, while the second and third engineers were left free to work the engines under the direction of the pirates. Pirate navigators assumed control of the bridge and gave the proper signals to the engine room. A very careful course though dangerous shoals were steered into the ship into a little bay known as Bias Bay. There, two junks, which had evidently been awaiting the arrival of the Childar, received the collected money and valuables which had been taken from the ship, the officers and the passengers.

Even the uniforms of the officers and the good clothes of the Chinese passengers were taken, and almost all the brass fittings of the ship. In all, the ship lost over \$10,000 in cargo, valuables and damages.

The pirates were, no doubt, much disappointed, for on two previous voyages the Childar had carried about \$50,000 worth of treasure of one sort and another, valuables that were negotiable ashore without serious danger of discovery. The pirates seemed to be angered by their failure to make the big haul they expected, for after looting the ship and passengers, they went through the cabins and engine rooms destroying willfully doors, fittings and furniture.

But the exploit was not without its humorous side. An English speaking buccannier, for instance, sympathizing



### TWENTY-FIVE MILES ROAD WORK AWARDED

Mount Airy Township Will Soon Have Best Highways In the State.

Special to The Gazette-News.

Mt. Airy, May 21.—The highway commission of Mt. Airy township has awarded the contract of constructing twenty-five miles of improved highway to Smith and Sweeney, the well known road experts of Atlanta, Ga., and this road is to be completed during the coming summer. The roads given out are Low Gap, old Hollow and White Sulphur Springs, and they are to be built under the supervision and direction of Civil Engineer C. M. Miller, of Salisbury, who is here for that purpose. The contractors are just completing a road from Walnut cove to Danbury, in Stokes county, and will move their hands, machinery and camp outfit here by the first of June. The completion of the roads practically means first class roads for the entire township, as there has already been about twenty-five miles of sand clay road constructed, and this will leave only a few unimportant roads to be built. For that purpose there is now in hand enough money.

### Utterly Selfish.

Nellie—That Clara Sharpe is just the meanest, most utterly selfish girl I ever saw. She never thinks of any one but herself. Dora—Tell me about it. Nellie—I ran in there the other evening for a few moments, and while I was there Mr. Spooner called. It wasn't long before he requested her to play. Her passionately fond of music, you know. Well, what do you think that girl did? She asked him to come to the piano and turn the music for her, so that I couldn't talk to him.

### THE WEATHER

pressure that has been over the Eastern states for several days is decreasing in energy but the weather continues generally fair in that portion of the country. The following heavy rains (in inches) have been reported: Del Rio, 2.51; Huron, 2.70; San Antonio, 1.82. Air weather is indicated for this vicinity tonight and Friday.

| Lowest                    | Highest |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Asheville . . . . . 44    | 77      |
| Atlanta . . . . . 60      | 80      |
| Augusta . . . . . 54      | 82      |
| Birmingham . . . . . 60   | 82      |
| Charleston . . . . . 60   | 86      |
| Charlotte . . . . . 64    | 82      |
| Helena . . . . . 40       | 56      |
| Jacksonville . . . . . 62 | 86      |
| Mobile . . . . . 64       | 82      |
| Montgomery . . . . . 58   | 82      |
| New Orleans . . . . . 66  | 84      |
| Raleigh . . . . . 58      | 82      |
| Savannah . . . . . 60     | 76      |
| Tampa . . . . . 58        | 82      |
| Washington . . . . . 66   | 86      |
| Wilmington . . . . . 56   | 80      |

Normals for this date: Temperature 64 degrees. Precipitation 1.14 inch. Forecasts until 8 p. m. Friday for Asheville and vicinity: Fair tonight and Friday. For North Carolina: Fair tonight and Friday, light to moderate north-west winds.

General Condition (Last 24 Hours).

A disturbance which is entering the Pacific states has caused rain in Oregon and Nevada. Weather conditions are more unsettled over the northern Plains states and the upper Mississippi valley and rains have occurred in most of the states from the northern Rocky Mountain region to the Great Lakes. Heavy rains have again fallen in southern Texas. The area of high

