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WHAT HE LOOKED FOR; OR THE OBJECT OF LIFE.

There are men who think that no one was ever busy before them. Truth is, every man from Adam on has thought of himself as "a very busy man;" has ten thousand times told his wife and neighbors that he had no time for this, that or the other unwelcome task.

Abraham was a busy man. Life moved stately in the patriarchal days; and across the centuries the activities of the early founders of civilization seem incomparably less complex and, therefore, more calm than the activities of Today. But Abraham was a busy man. His movements seem at this great distance so majestic because he chose to live majestically—not because he did not have the thousand little burdens that harass every busy man even unto this day. There was then the question of labor; there was then the question of crop conditions, the drought and the flood; there was then the question of supply and demand; there was then the care of the flocks, the menace of disease and of wild beasts. There were the household cares, of no mean severity. There were the inimical tribes, and no strong government to rely upon—a state of lawlessness. There was upon Abraham's mind the burden of a vast estate in a strange country. He was a busy man. He had a nation to found and a religion to voice forth in the midst of surroundings most adverse and in a time when difficulties were far greater than they ever can be again.

But Abraham's life moved serenely. Of all the characters in the Bible his is marked most distinctly by the quality of poise. We should know why—we heirs of Abraham's faith. If ever there was a man immersed in material engagements, it was he. If ever there was a man beset with the gad-flies of life's little toilsome day, it was he. And yet he moved as a star moves, seems to you and me now as a star—a capital star—in the great heavens of Revelation. He was brother to the stars.

Whole generations are blind. One man is eyes and soul for a million. There were thousands of years in which no one could divine Abraham's secret. He stood forth for ages as only the father of the faithful—the founder of Israel. One man looks at a star and sees only a star. Another looks and reveals to his fellows a universe. When Abraham swept into Paul's gaze, after Christ had given him new eyes, Paul explained Abraham for all the generations:

"By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out not knowing whither he went. By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: **FOR HE LOOKED FOR THE CITY WHICH HATH THE FOUNDATIONS, WHOSE BUILDER AND MAKER IS GOD.**"

This founder of a new nation upon earth, this master of a great estate, this man beset with material things, "looked for the city." Not the lost cities of Chaldea, not a better city; not the city of Jerusalem of Judea; but the new Jerusalem—eternal in the heavens, the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. This explains the poise of his career. "By faith * * * he looked."

We men of Today so busy with our material engagements, one keeping the wolf from the door, another amassing a fortune that will perhaps break the other's door down before the wolf, we men of religion immersed in groceries, life insurance and gold dollars or copper pennies, are prone to surrender and say, "I am busy, I cannot

spare the time." Before this formula our religion falls, our home-life falls, our own souls fall; our happiness falls, and our life's aims are defeated. We make of ourselves puppets of Fate and life is tragical and hard. To us comes Abraham, as busy and as beset as any one of us is, and reveals the nobler way: Not to let the things of this world go, but to master them by looking to the city that is not founded upon temporal things, but that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. So shall we make the things of this life a means not the end; servants not masters.

So, too, we men who are breaking our hearts to get the world right—hammering away on our Drink Evil, our Race Problem, our Degenerate Politics, our Illiteracy, our Child Labor, our Divorce Curse. Are we not making a mistake? Is not our gaze fixed too intently upon Time? God forbid that any one should cease to strive to improve conditions; to elevate the race. For this does God give us life. But we, too, may look with Abraham and all the roll of the saints not to the perfection of temporal cities, but to the Perfect City whose builder and maker is God. So shall we be enabled in ways that we know not to build our cities here—our passing tents, in truth, for the cities of Time shall at length be folded as the tents of Jacob—more perfectly. So shall our hearts know no defeat; so shall our visions remain exalted; so shall our faith be kept pure and lofty. So, amid the utmost toil and discouragement shall we have peace.

We sojourn here—in tents, as it were—not merely to make the tents more comfortable or numerous, but to make ready for the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. This is the land of our sojourning; the abiding home is the City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. It is worth while to attend well and diligently to the things of this life because so shall we make ready for the life that is to come. Our eyes should look to that life and every aim and every deed should centre in it. Only by looking for the City of God shall we succeed in building aright the cities of Time.

THE LOST SHEEP.

The poem entitled "Dat Lil' Brack Sheep" in the Recorder of June 17, prompted Miss Mittie Ellis, of West Raleigh, to send us the poem below, the author of which is unknown to her:

De massa ob de sheep fol'—
Dat guard de sheep fol' bin
Look out in the gloomerin' meadows
When de long night rain begin—
So he call to de hirelin' shepa'd,
Is my sheep, is dey all come in?

O den says he hirelin' shepa'd,
Dar's some, dey's black and thin,
And some, dey's po' ol' wedda's,
But de res', dey's all brung in,
But de res', dey's all brung in.

Den de massa of de sheepfol'
Dat guard de sheepfol' bin,
Goes down in de gloomerin' meadows,
Whar de long night rain begin—
So he le' down de bars ob de sheepfol',
Callin' sof: Come in, Come in!
Callin' sof: Come in, Come in!

Den up tro' de gloomerin' meadows,
T'ro' de col' night rain and win',
And up 'tro' de gloomerin' rain paf'
Whar de sleet fa' piercin' thin,
De po los' sheep of de sheepfol',
Dey all comes gadderin in,
De po los' sheep of de shepfol',
Dey all comes gadderin in.

SOME CAUSES OF CRIME AMONG NEGROES.

Frances A. Kellor, author of "Experimental Sociology," in a valuable article in the April Southern Workman, enumerates the agencies which should be made use of in any attempt to decrease the criminality of negroes. She lays especial stress on the importance of better conditions within the home. She says: "Defects in the general domestic life of families, which make criminal careers of children more possible, include intemperance; immorality, which affects children both in inheritance and by example; inharmonious relations of parents; lax or too rigid discipline, either of which prevents confidence and mutual interests of parents and children; lack of knowledge and opportunity for individual training; absence of cultural and educational agencies within the home; poverty; unsanitary conditions and otherwise unfavorable localities for homes; illegitimacy; absence of refuges for homeless children; presence of step-parents. In many of these particulars the negro's home is below the standard required for efficient citizenship.

"The need of organized charity is perhaps one of the most essential and unrecognized. There is much indiscriminate giving—an unconscious pauperizing—so that negroes rely much upon gifts; this is a natural condition surviving slavery. But organized charity, which requires certain standards to be maintained within the family, friendly visitors, and work in return for assistance, would tend just as certainly to prevent pauperism among negroes as it has among whites."

REASONS FOR CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOLS.

A small school is usually a weak school because it lacks the interest, importance and inspiration that attaches to a large school.

A small school is an expensive school, because of the high cost per pupil. To reduce the expenses, cheap and inefficient teachers are often employed.

The remedy is consolidation.

We already have the necessary legal machinery needed to secure consolidation. To make it effective provision for transportation of pupils at public expense may be necessary in certain communities. Such transportation is no new thing. Massachusetts began in 1869 and last year expended \$150,000 for this purpose. Twenty States have now provided for transportation at public expense. The positive advantages of consolidation include:

1. The better health of the children. No more wet feet and damp clothing.

2. Punctuality and regularity of attendance. Reports from other States indicate an improvement of from fifteen to thirty-five per cent. Irregular attendance is now probably the greatest obstacle to successful work in rural schools.

3. Fewer schools to build. They will be better cared for, better heated and ventilated, better provided with libraries and apparatus, and more beautiful in appearance.

4. The consolidated school brings high school privileges to all.

5. It gives opportunity for closer and more effective supervision.

6. The larger number of children and regular attendance will make classification practicable. There will be a notable increase in interest and enthusiasm.

7. There will be fewer teachers needed. Directors will think it worth while to demand thorough professional preparation and pay an adequate salary.

8. Membership in the school board will become an office of greater dignity and honor. The best men in the consolidated districts will be chosen and will give the school a larger share of their time and attention.

9. The consolidated school is generally less expensive. The saving of teachers' wages is usually more than enough to pay all expenses of transportation.

10. School consolidation will cooperate with rural mail delivery to emphasize the need of better roads, and end the isolation of farm life.

Our present school system was adapted to an old order of things—hand labor on the farms, a dense rural population, decentralization and small enterprises in all things. We must reorganize our schools in accordance with changed conditions.