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A Psalm of Hard Times.

Tell me not in hopeful ditties
That there are no idle men,
For the cry from all the cities
Proves you've lied and lied
again.
Need is real! Men are earnest,
Hunting work the country
through;
But the Cleveland time returnest,
And they find no work to do.
Not enjoyment—only sorrow
For poor families in distress;
Where they'll get a meal tomorrow
None would even dare to guess.
Debts are large, and cash is fleeting,
And our hearts, once light and gay,
Now like court-house bells are beating
For the sheriff's auction day.
In the world's broad field of battle,
In this hot commercial hell,
Poor folks are a helpless chattel
That the rich may buy and sell.
Trust no plute, however winning
His fair promises may sound;
He'll be nice at the beginning
Just to get you gagged and bound.
Lives of rich men all remind us
That we poor men made it all—
Forging chains of wealth to bind us
While at Mammon's feet we crawl.
Crawling that perhaps another,
Who may vote a few years hence—
Some forlorn and soup fed brother—
Seeing us, shall learn some sense.

Uncle Sam has crawfished backwards until he is in the Leeg all but his head. But still he swears he is not in. A fool ostrich will hide its head in the sand and think it is all hid. Uncle Sam ought to have more sense than an ostrich.

"AMERICAN PRISONERS."

"The United States government refuses to have any dealings whatsoever with the present Russian government until all Americans now held prisoner are summarily released. No government in Russia can come even within hailing distance of the United States government, it was emphatically announced, until the prisoners are given their freedom."

The above is from a news story sent out by David Lawrence under a Washington date line. So it seems that Uncle Sam has got terribly interested all at once in having American prisoners turned loose. Well, he's got a mighty good chance to start the ball a-rolling right here in his own native land. He might begin by releasing Eugene Debs and a hundred or so of other political prisoners who are being kept in jail for the "crime" of trying to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

It seems to be an awful crime for Russia to hold a few American prisoners, but it is no crime at all for America to keep hundreds of her best citizens in jail without even the shadow of an excuse for doing so.

If America wants prisoners released, why in all creation don't she set the example? It sounds very inconsistent for the United States to be fussing about wanting other nations to turn prisoners loose, while such a great and good man as Debs is kept in jail here at home.

Does anybody suppose that the Russians do not know about Debs and our other political prisoners? Does anybody think they are too ignorant to see through our empty shams and pretensions?

No, sir, the Russians are not as big fools as some fools in this country seem to think they are. They can stand an American boycott just as long as America can, and perhaps longer. Uncle Sam is just cutting off his nose to spite his face. And he will find it out when too late.

"DESTROY" vs. "PUT AWAY"

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.—I John 3:8.

Here we see that the Son of God is going to DESTROY all the works of the devil. That will include death and sin and every evil thing that we know, and if there were such a place as the orthodox hell it would include that, too.

We used to hear it called the "bad place," and if it is bad it certainly is one of the devil's jobs and is to be destroyed. And if all the works of the devil are destroyed it will remove every bad thing out of the whole universe. There could not be a "bad place," and there could not be any sinners to suffer in it, because as long as one sinner is still living in an orthodox hell there still remains some of the devil's works, and the Son of God would have to acknowledge that he had failed to do what he said he was going to do.

Have you got such little confidence in Jesus that you think he is going to fail in the main thing that he set out to do? If that's all you know about Jesus and his power to do things I am afraid you are a mighty poor Christian.

No, he is not going to fail. He is going to destroy all the works of the devil, AND WHEN HE SAYS DESTROY HE MEANS DESTROY—he does not mean sweeping them up in a corner and letting them lie there and stink throughout endless eternity. God does not do that sort of house-cleaning. When God sees something lying around in his way that he's got no use for—something that is ugly and repulsive and evil and never can be any benefit to anybody, he does not set aside one big section of his universe to hold all that useless junk. He just blots it out of ex-

istence, and that's the way the Son of God is going to destroy the devil and all his works.

That's what the Book says, and I'm fool enough to believe it. But all the big orthodox preachers come along and tell me the Bible has got it wrong. They say that sin and evil and all the works of the devil are going to exist right on and on, and that the Son of God never had any notion of doing what he said he was going to do.

I came across something in my reading the other day that was so funny I just had to bust out and laugh. I was reading a sermon on this very same text by one of the big Eternal Torment pop-guns, and I want to show you how he fixed it. He began by quoting the text, "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," and after going through a great long rigamarole in which he tried his best to twist all the meaning out of the text, he wound up by saying, "And Satan himself will be banished—he will be PUT AWAY; every sinner will have been PUT AWAY."

Now don't that cap the stack? Bless my gizzard! PUT AWAY! The text does not say a word about putting anything away. It says all evil things will be DESTROYED. Imagine God saying to some of the angels, "Here, you angels, come and gather up all this nastiness that the devil has smeared over my universe. Pick up every scrap of filth and nastiness you can find and put it all away carefully in the basement, because I might need it sometime."

My sakes alive! It must take an awful lot of nerve to be an orthodox preacher and dispute God's word like that. It's a wonder to me that God don't thunder strike every one of them.

Tell your neighbor about this.