

The St. Tammany Farmer

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Good beet root yields an average of 12 per cent. of sugar.

Goosebone prophets who foretold a long, cold winter are getting anxious and anxious about their reputations.

As a health restorative a French medical expert recommends a ten to fifteen days' diet of fruit alone, twice a year.

Abruzzi may still be a great man in his own country, but over here he has dropped entirely out of the prominent citizen class.

It is reported that a German professor has made no outcry over the fact that King Edward has personally written to Andrew Carnegie.

There is a bank clerk in Elyria, O., who never has any difficulty in striking a balance. His father was a slack-rope walker, and his mother was a trick bicycle rider.

Were the Mrs. Gilman brand of sociology to come into vogue there would soon be no society for sociology to operate upon and the exuders of guff would be among the unemployed.

Miss Ross Becker has been appointed a claim agent and United States pension attorney at Missouri. She has been known for years as one of the most successful women in St. Louis, being a notary public and an insurance agent.

Massachusetts has a law to prevent recklessness and speeding in automobiles, which law may be rendered ridiculous by its wrong punctuation, as it forbids driving over roads "laid out under the authority of the law recklessly or while under the influence of liquor." Boston, in consequence, is in rhetorical spasms.

The secretary of the Colorado state bureau of child protection believes that a bad child gets its start from an ill-ordered home or from parents who possess evil traits of character, and wants a law passed making parents responsible for the misdoings of their minor children. But as bad traits of character are often inherited, what would the secretary do in case of an adopted child?

In a fire panic in a New York cheap theater, a so-called exit was found to be a veritable trap, barring in the fleeing crowd instead of letting them find a way to safety. One would naturally suppose that the holocaust in Chicago would have prevented this dangerous practice for all time; but the lessons of catastrophes are quickly lost, especially when they are followed by no retributive measures.

There will naturally be much feminine sympathy for the New Jersey woman who has appeared in court to complain about her husband's cruel treatment. The Washington Star, who says: "I am a great mate of a cooking school. I make biscuits, pies, cake and all sorts of dainties, to please him, and he calls it all 'indigestion fodder!'" The judge advised the woman to cook sorbed beef and cabbage occasionally, and she said she would.

A Minneapolis woman is suing the Western Union Telegraph Company for damages because when she telegraphed to her brother that "Pat," her husband, was drinking, and "to come at once," the message was made to read "Pat is dying," and a horde of relatives, notified by her brother, came from far and near to attend the wake, and she had the expenses to pay. If Pat had had anything to say in the matter he would probably have permitted them to pay their own expenses.

Said an anxious mother to the family doctor: "What shall I do with my daughter Mary? She is simply candy crazy and, of course, eating nothing substantial makes her pale, if not downright yellow." Said the wise physician to the anxious mother: "Put Mary into a sweet shop, and she'll soon abhor the stuff. It is heroic treatment, but it will cure her appetite for candy." Poor Mary! says the Indianapolis Star, how much pleasure she is going to lose for lack of a little self-denial.

An extraordinary demand has arisen in the eastern counties of England for second-hand Bibles—the older and dirtier the better. Copies which formerly realized four pence are now readily bought for half a crown. They are being used to manufacture evidence of age in the case of old-age pensions. A woman who produced a Bible to prove her age as 76 from an entry on the flyleaf had, unfortunately, omitted to tear out the title page, which showed that the Bible was printed in 1895.

American musicians have complained to the president that imported musicians get the jobs. As the question turns on whether these latter are artists or contract laborers, and the Americans are determined to protect their jobs, anyway, there is plainly going to be some music in the air.

"Death Valley Scotty," who gave away money when he could not get rid of it fast enough by spending it, wants now to become a marine. He would make a good one for the wise ones to tell their troubles to.

A Paris journal suggests that in order to rid the world of rats the various governments should offer a reward of one penny for each rat killed. Denmark, it appears, has already set the example. There, since a law was passed giving a halfpenny a head for dead rats, the schoolboys of Copenhagen devote their playtime to hunting the rodent.

When it comes to investigating the manners, customs and, especially, movements of mice, one sees how it is that science has so few feminine ad vocates.

The Magic Billiard Ball

By EDMUND SMITH MIDDLETON

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In the lull of an August afternoon Shaman Tuloc sat within the shaded doorway of his little shop, contentedly smoking. From time to time a thin brown hand slowly stroked his long gray beard, while his dark, melancholy eyes looked far away into the distance.

Presently a shadow darkened the doorway, as a well-dressed stranger halted uncertainly and gazed curiously within. The old merchant rose courteously and with a wave of his hand extended a silent invitation to enter. Seeing that the stranger still hesitated, Shaman said in a tone devoid of eagerness: "Would the gentleman care to step in? It is not necessary to buy."

An air of distinction in the old man's bearing, scarcely expected in such surroundings, excited the stranger's interest, and with an appreciative: "Thank you, if you don't mind," he entered.

The merchant noted the young man's eyes as they swept over his wares with half-observant gaze, and saw that his face wore the unsatisfied expression of one who seeks something greatly desired.

"It is not merchandise, the gentleman seeks to-day," said Shaman, with kindly interest, continuing to search the other's face with his far-seeing orbs.

"Are you a fortune-teller?" asked the stranger, eagerly.

"Not in the ordinary sense, my son," answered the aged merchant, solemnly, "but much of the wisdom of the east is mine, and I have known the hearts of many men."

"If you help me," burst impulsively from the other's lips, "you may name your own price."

"I am listening, my son," answered Shaman, with dignity, apparently unmoved by these glittering promises.

"My name is Philip Arden," began the young man in quick, excited tones, "and I am what people call rich. If my lot had been different, with my own way to make, I should doubtless

have become a gambler, as the gaming instinct is strong within me. At times I am consumed with a perfect fever to excel at games involving chance and skill."

"Why do you tell this to me?" demanded the old man.

"You shall see," answered Arden, meeting his glance fairly. "Being wealthy, the gambler's love of gain does not appeal to me. Instead, I have devoted myself to games of skill, playing as an amateur with men of my own class. After making a fad of one game after another, I have settled upon billiards, to which I have devoted myself, heart and soul, for two years."

"No lover could be more devoted to his mistress than I to my favorite game. I wooed her early and late, playing my way up through the ranks of the club, until last spring I defeated the strongest men and was hailed club champion. But alas! my joy was short-lived."

"Your hand lost its cunning?" suggested Shaman Tuloc.

"No, not so. A more subtle hand than mine entered the lists," explained Arden with a touch of bitterness in his tone. "While my laurels were yet fresh, a stranger joined the club, a tall, slender man, with sallow skin and coal-black hair, which parted over a narrow, contracted forehead. Enough for me that he could play billiards like a head. His long slender hands controlled the balls like a magician. He defeated me once, twice, three—each time worse than before—in a word, he nominously. Let me vanquish him! Help me to defeat him!" cried Arden, moved to the depths of his being, "and I will give you what you like."

Shaman Tuloc smoked awhile in silence, then rose from his seat and drew a small casket from a secret recess in the rear of the shop. The box was of fragrant sandal-wood, wrapped with cords and sealed in many places. Carefully removing these, he disclosed a small bundle of numerous layers of fine silk, concealing some object within. Very reverently the old man unwrapped the silken folds until there lay uncovered in his palm a small cylinder of ivory of wondrous quality, and without spot or blemish.

"My son, you behold a portion of the tusk of the sacred elephant of Siam, the most sacred of the holy herd. He went into the silence at the age of 200 years, and this relic possesses a mighty power. Listen to the words on the scroll. I will interpret." As Shaman Tuloc spoke he lifted from the casket an oriental scroll and reverently held it towards the light.

"To the pure and single of heart," he read in a low voice, "I will grant his wish."

"I will give any price, fulfill any conditions," exclaimed Arden, in a choking voice, his whole form trembling. "Look! What do you see?" the old man suddenly demanded, holding the ivory above his head.

"I see a delicate pink light shining through the ivory," answered Arden, excitedly. "It seems to move and tremble like a rose swaying in the breeze."

"It is the soul of the sacred tusk!" cried Tuloc, triumphantly, "the spirit, the life, therein lies the power."

"What am I to do? Tell me!" demanded the young man.

"Bring from your club the finest ball you have. My hands shall fashion its mate in size and appearance from the sacred tusk. I will entrust the task to no other. In a week's time you shall have a ball, endowed with the living spirit of victory."

That same evening Arden brought from the club the desired model and the next day Shaman Tuloc began his self-imposed task. As he wrought his labor of love, patiently, silently, with reverential skill, the slender, graceful form of his only daughter glided often through the parted curtains and hung on her father's shoulder with moist eyes and heaving bosom.

On the eighth day the ball was finished, and to the instructed eye seem to throb visibly with sentient life, as it lay, white and glistening, in the sandal casket.

"Take it, my son," said Shaman Tuloc, committing the box to him. "Let no other hand than mine use this sacred ball. Let no other interest divide your heart. Then victory will attend."

The report that Arden was to play his conqueror again filled the club house. An undefinable feeling was in the air that this game would possess unusual features—that it was a strife for mastery to an unusual degree.

To the surprise of his ferret-eyed opponent, Arden, playing with the sacred ball, won the bank. The balls were spotted and the game began. One style of play was 14-inch ball line, one shot in. Without effort, by graceful, easy play, Arden rolled off run after run. His ball was absolutely under control, and the audience was with him to a man, following his game with frequent applause. But, do what he would, Arden could not shake off his opponent. He answered run with run, and invariably finished a point or two in the lead.

Arden, however, never lost confidence for a moment in his ball or the outcome of the game. As the players approached the goal, the 300 mark, almost abreast, but the dark man still in the lead, the excitement grew intense. With only eight to go, the latter ran six and missed on his 299th shot. A hateful scowl showed on his face, but changed instantly to a triumphant smile, as he saw that Arden, who stood at 295, was left an impossible shot.

Arden's ball lay tight against the cushions in one corner; the red ball in the same position in the far corner on the other side, and his opponent's ball against the cushion along the rail half-way between the other two balls.

It, indeed, looked to be an impossible shot, but Arden, with unruffled confidence, played a masse, whose like had never been seen on that or any other table. His ball, with a beautiful curve, spun to the ball half way down the rail, continued its journey in the same marvelously accurate fashion to the red ball, and counted, of course. The house fairly thundered its applause. The result of the shot was to leave the three balls lined up along the center of the table. A second brilliant masse counted 297, and the remaining three shots were clicked off in rapid succession.

As Arden made the last shot, which meant victory for him, he felt his eyes drawn irresistibly across the table to the tier of seats opposite. His gaze rested on a pair of eyes shining with a radiance he had never seen before. As he felt himself yielding to their power and started toward them, a strange thing happened. With a sudden click the wonderful ball, with which he had played and won, snapped asunder and parted into two pieces. As it fell apart Arden saw an appearance like a delicate pink flame leave the ball, pass through the air towards the wonderful eyes, then over the head of Shaman Tuloc's beautiful daughter and away.

A minute later Arden was holding her by the hands and gazing at close range into those wondrous orbs. Tuloc hastened to the table and clasped the precious fragments of ivory to his breast.

Later that night, as he stood beside the beautiful Esther in her father's shop, Arden asked: "Why did the ivory ball snap and the pink soul flee away?"

"Because, my son, another love had come into your heart—?" and then, as Shaman Tuloc looked on the young people, he raised his hands and said, solemnly: "The God of heaven bless you, my children!"

Beller!

"Here, Cash! Cash!" called the salesgirl, excitedly.

"Here I am," responded Cash, as she slid swiftly around the corner of the counter.

"Here, take this, and hurry, now. What's your name?"

"Beller."

"All right, Beller. Be quick. Lady's in a hurry."

"Oh, dear," gasped the western woman. "Do you suppose that pretty child really has such a frightful name as Beller?"

"Don't worry, dear," said the New York woman soothingly. "Her name is Bella, but she's evidently from New England and probably never has heard herself talk into a phonograph."

Ancient Ink Better Than Ours.

The question of making durable ink perplexes the manufacturers of to-day. Observe closely any letter five or ten years old and one will notice that in all probability the writing has faded to a brown color and is very indistinct. Go to any large museum and there will be seen ancient manuscripts the writing of which is as black and distinct as if it had been done the day before yesterday.

A CITY OF AVENUES

SO THE CAPITAL MIGHT APPROPRIATELY BE STYLED.

Americans May Well Be Proud of the Beautiful Results That Have Followed the Work of Major L'Enfant.

When Washington was laid out by Major L'Enfant it was planned on a scale for a city of half a million inhabitants. The major had the advantage of a clear field to work in. There were no conflicting interests to harmonize, real estate owners were kept off the site until everything was ready. So he made his plans for a beautiful municipal planity. Avoiding the gridiron scheme of the regular rectangular streets of Philadelphia, he proposed a gridiron system broken by diagonal avenues radiating from two chief foci, the main one, the capitol, and the other the White House.



These diagonal avenues, it must be admitted, are mighty confusing to a stranger. When he is wandering along and suddenly emerges into a parkway from which six or eight streets diverge, it needs a level head and an eye to topography to figure out how to escape. But this disadvantage passes away with familiarity and the great benefit of the diagonal plan is apparent. Diagonal streets give them the finest possible opportunities for splendid vistas of architecture and sculpture.

Washington is full of "circles," where the diagonal avenues cross the rectangular streets. These are little parkways, many of them, unfortunately, disfigured by poor statues. Perhaps some day the town will have the nerve to get rid of these pieces of sculpture and leave the circular spots of green in all their original beauty.

The diagonal street plan was merely one phase of L'Enfant's comprehensive scheme of grouping the public buildings. At one end of Pennsylvania avenue he planned the White House flanked by the treasury and the state, war and navy department buildings. At the other end of the avenue on a slight hill he assigned the site for the capitol, which to-day seems to float in the air, a veritable dream palace, as seen through the mist from the treasury steps.

South of the White House is the Washington monument and the mile and a half from the monument to the capitol is laid off in the Mall. It is expected eventually to clear off practically all the buildings south of Pennsylvania avenue, thus extending the Mall northward to this diagonal line. On this vast parkway in the heart of the city the future government buildings will be grouped. Magnificent opportunities to obtain architectural effects will be afforded by this plan.

Before many years this example is going to be followed by other cities.

Almost \$100,000 Subscribed, and a Corporation Will Be Formed.

Almost \$100,000 was subscribed at a public meeting at Washington toward the erection in that city of a great auditorium building, one of the objects of which is to accommodate the numerous conventions of a national and international character which meet annually in the national capital. Secretary of State Root, Assistant Secretary Bacon and other public men participated.

Fifty well-known business men have signed articles of incorporation for the proposed building, under the title of the National Auditorium Company of Washington. The site is in Seventeenth Street Northwest, between the Corcoran Art gallery and the Hall of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Among the subscribers are Thomas F. Walsh and Levi P. Morton, each contributing \$5,000.

In urging the great necessity for such an auditorium Secretary Root declared that it is "undignified and most injurious to the city that the present condition of affairs should continue." This city, he pointed out, was without an adequate building for holding important conventions, the inaugural ball, etc., and the recent international tuberculosis congress had to be housed in an unfinished building.

Had No Use for Iceboat.

I just learned the other day that when a rather well-known New York member of the house was elected some terms ago he shipped his fast-flying iceboat to Washington ahead of him, says a writer in the Washington Star. He had been here in the summer time, he had admired the wide stretches of the sleepy Potomac, and he had visions of all sorts of steel runners fun here during the sessions of congress. Needless to say that iceboat went back north with the member when congress adjourned. There have been years in Washington when iceboating might have been possible on the Potomac—it strikes me I remember a time not so long ago when the Potomac was frozen as far down as Alexandria—but the year the iceboat came here didn't happen to be one of them.

Hitchcock Is Noncommittal.

Frank H. Hitchcock is as noncommittal on any subject as was the late Senator Allison, of whom it was related that when some one said in the senate in discussing a bill to remove the snow from the streets of Washington that "it will snow again," the senator remarked: "I will not go that far. I will say it may snow again." Hitchcock was besieged for news when he returned here from Atlanta the other day. Every question brought an evasive answer. "Finally one newspaper man said: 'Will you tell whether you like 'possum meat?'" "No, I wouldn't like to say," said he. "I have always made it a rule not to reflect on anybody, not even a 'possum."

SECRETARY ROOT TELLS STORY.

Retiring Official Illustrates Difficulties of His Position.

There are days when the secretary of state finds his friends smuggling up with a view of taking care of other friends who are holding down berths in the foreign service. The diplomatic and consular services are in a way under the aegis of the civil service, that is, a man's record on other missions helps him more than the help of powerful friends. But a word from the retiring secretary of state about the efficiency of a certain diplomat or consul will go a long way toward smoothing his way through the Knox administration.

Mr. Root is not an approachable or genial man, but he has his moments of relaxation. He is president of the Metropolitan club, and during the Christmas recess he made several visits to greet his old friends before his official status changed. He listened attentively to some chums who talked up this ambassador and put in a word for a friend in the consular service. Then he said: "I will try to remember all this, and I will do the best I can. Which reminds me of a tale which the late Lord Pauncefote told with great gusto. Lord Pauncefote, as all who were privileged to know him will recall, suffered greatly from rheumatism gout in his later days, and he walked stiffly and sometimes had to use two canes. He went one afternoon to make a call, and he remained quite a long time, so long that the horses got restive and the groom walked them up and down the street. When Lord Pauncefote left the house the carriage was not in front, and thinking there was some mistake in his orders, he started to walk to the embassy, which was only a square or two. But he had twinges of his old enemy and the pavement was icy. He was a large, heavily built man, and he feared a fall. While he was pondering over his dilemma, along came a young man in working clothes, and the British ambassador, after a courteous salutation, asked: 'My friend, will you walk beside me and help me home? It is just a short way, but I am afraid of falling. I shall greatly appreciate it.' The young man looked him over and said, thickly: 'Old gent, I am pretty full myself, but I'll do the best I can, the very best I can.' That's my dilemma," ended Mr. Root. "I am pretty full of promises already on file, but I'll do the very best I can."

Would Keep Senator Quesada.

Cuban Minister Popular with the Authorities at Washington.

While there can be no expression on the part of any official of this government, there is a very strong feeling in all circles in Washington that the reported intention of the new Cuban government forming to transfer Mr. Gonzalo de Quesada, the Cuban minister, to France and Spain, and substitute some one else for him, will not be carried out. It is no exaggeration to say that members of the American congress, including some of the most prominent leaders, say that instead of Mr. Quesada's usefulness here being at an end, it is at its height. He has been in Washington many years, having in the first place been a member of the famous Cuban junta which did so much for the independence of Cuba under the most trying circumstances, and at a time when the influence of the Spanish legation here was paramount in the councils of the senate.

He has served his country as minister from the formation of the first government of the Republic of Cuba, and he has done so with much acceptability. He has been very close in his relations to President Roosevelt, and will be in a similar position with reference to the Taft administration, should he remain.

Senator Aldrich, recently at the White House offices, meeting Mr. Quesada, expressed the hope that he would not be succeeded by another, adding: "You can get anything for your government you ask for from the congress of the United States."

Schools to Teach the Use of Mails.

How to use the United States mails and those of other countries will soon be included in the education course in the public schools of Newark.

Postmaster James L. Hays has been advocating this for some time and the committee of the board of education which has charge of the course of study has decided to advise its adoption by the board.

Mr. Hays says that the school children, even in the higher grades, know little or nothing about the mails.

As a rule they could not even properly address a letter, omitting some essential like the state or the city or the street.

How to obtain a money order or register a letter was mere of a mystery to boys and girls of 14 or 15 than to foreign-born residents.

Of the thousands of letters sent to the dead letter office annually from New York city, a large portion were mailed by school children.

His First Experience with Egg-nogg.

I remember, writes a Washington correspondent, a time some years ago when a newspaper man fresh from New England was induced to enter a memorandum for the purpose of being inflated into the mysteries of egg-nogg, which delectable beverage had never previously rolled over his tongue.

He partook and partook and kept partaking, being delighted beyond measure with the smooth taste of the stuff, and evidently considering it harmless, until suddenly it came over him, as he leaned against the wall in the last place of refreshment and tried to count one little elusive light, that he was the proud possessor of a comprehensive and ornate soiree.

He was puzzled and became grave at once.

"Gosh," he said at length, his brow furrowed with the intense mental effort required for consecutive thought, "them was the strongest eggs I ever ate."

Not in the Natural Order.

"It would be rather an odd solution of that case, wouldn't it?"

"What solution of what case?"

"If the Thaw case should turn out a frost."

ZECHARIAH'S CALL

The Prophet Takes Up the Work Begun by Haggai.

BY THE "HIGHWAY AND BYWAY" PREACHER

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The Prophet Zechariah.—He was the son of Berechiah, and grandson of Iddo, and was probably of the tribe of Levi. He was born in Babylon, and like Haggai, came to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel. He seems to have entered upon his mission when quite young (Zech. 2:4). The foundation of the temple had indeed been laid, but that was all (Ezra 3:10). Discouraged by the opposition and the long delay of 14 years in the building the Jewish colony were slow to take up the work again even when the letter came from Darius sanctioning the work, and promising his protection. At such a time no more fitting instrument could be found to rouse the people, whose hearts had grown cold, than one who united to the authority of the prophet the zeal and the traditions of the sacerdotal family. Accordingly, to Zechariah's influence we find the rebuilding a great measure ascribed (Ezra 5:10). Later traditions assume, what is indeed very probable, that Zechariah took personally an active part in providing for the liturgical service of the temple. He and Haggai are both said to have composed psalms with this view. If the later Jewish accounts may be trusted, Zechariah, as well as Haggai, was a member of the great synagogue. Zechariah is the only one of the prophets who speaks of Satan.

Scripture Authority.—Zechariah, chapter 1.

SERMONETTE.

No permanent work of reform can be accomplished until there is a change of heart.

Haggai, the prophet, had succeeded in arousing governor, priest and people to a pitch of enthusiasm where the work of rebuilding the temple was taken up. And after the first burst of enthusiasm interest began to lag.

It needs more than outward enthusiasm to keep any reform movement going. There must be depth of conviction, and consecration of purpose to give the long, hard, steady pull that will lead on to successful completion of the work.

And the work which Haggai had so splendidly begun, the young man Zechariah was raised up to complete. His was a deeper work, a work which was to get below the surface and grip the heart for the long pull and the hard pull, and the pull all together.

The success of any movement does not depend so much upon the crowd who are ready to take up the shout of the multitudes during the popular excitement, but, rather, upon the few into whose hearts there has come the deep conviction of the righteousness of the cause in which they have enlisted, and who are ready in the face of the most discouraging circumstances and opposition to press forward.

To bring such people to the support of the governor in his great temple building enterprise was the task which Zechariah was called, and his first message was one of warning and appeal.

The sad history of the past was recalled that the people who would listen might understand how sin had taken the people away from God, and that the sin had been followed by punishment.

But if now the people would turn to the Lord he would turn to them. They must get right with God before the work of the temple building could prosper.

So it is with any work to which God calls his people to-day. Those engaged in the work must get right with God before the work of the temple building could prosper.

So it is with any work to which God calls his people to-day. Those engaged in the work must get right with God before they can do consistent and persistent and efficient work.

To the builders of the Kingdom of his righteousness to-day, God is saying as he says to the temple builder: "Turn ye unto me, and I will turn unto you."

THE STORY.

IT WAS two full months now since the stirring message of the prophet Haggai had aroused governor and people to again take up the work of rebuilding the temple. Much had been done in that time, for the people in the first flush of their enthusiasm took hold of the task with a will. But the work completed seemed nothing in comparison to what still remained to be done, and discouragement and doubt began to dampen the ardor of the people. Fewer came to labor on the task, and those who did come labored half-heartedly.

That very day Zerubbabel the governor had sent out appeal for more workers and had sought to arouse those who were at work to more energetic efforts. But apparently to no avail.

Zechariah had been among those who had responded to the first call of the governor for workers, and every day since then he had been at his self-imposed post of duty. But as has been said, the work had begun to lag and the appeal of the governor that day had met with no response, and as Zechariah wended his way home that night his heart was heavy within him.

Belonging as he did to the tribe of Levi, and being the son of devout parents who had trained him reverently with the thought of his ultimate place among the priesthood, he had early wholly given himself to God and was an eager student of all the wonderful history of his nation and God's dealings with them.

He recalled that night during his walk home how eager and joyful he had been when the caravan of returning Jews had set out from Babylon. All through that long journey he

had pictured himself the future glory of the beloved Jerusalem. How the temple would be rebuilt and the city take on much of the old life and activity which had marked it in the days of its former glory.

And now he contrasted the pictures which his enthusiastic young hope had drawn with the realities of the present, after 15 years of struggle and waiting.

"What has been God's purpose in bringing his people back to Zion if the temple is not to be rebuilt?" he asked himself, as he reached his modest little room and sat down on the low bench and watched with a far-away look the sun sink out of sight in the west.

His frugal meal was forgotten, and he was unconscious of the gathering darkness. His whole thought centered around the history of the return of the Jews to Jerusalem and the evident failure of the highest hopes of the movement. And he went on to catechise himself as to why such things could be.

"God has spoken of great blessing to his people at Jerusalem," mused Zechariah. "Was it not his promise that after 70 years he would return the captivity and establish his people in Zion? Had not Daniel searched out these promises given by the prophet Jeremiah and had not they found fulfillment in the return 15 years before? Had not the return been with gladness, and had not the manifest blessing of God rested upon the movement?"

With what joy, he thought, had they begun the rebuilding of the temple in order that God might have a dwelling place in their midst. And the work had progressed to the point where the ruins had been cleared and the foundation walls again built ready to begin the opposition of the Samaritans and the work was stopped. But now the king of Babylon was dead and Darius had come to the throne, and with the change had come the new inspiration and hope that the work on the temple would be resumed.

Haggai had come with his stirring message, and had reassured the people with the promise that God was with them. But now after two months the work was lagging and gave indications of ceasing again altogether.

"What is the matter?" exclaimed Zechariah. "What can be done to rouse the people and hold them to their tasks? It needs more than the enthusiasm which first aroused the people," he muttered to himself as he leaned out of the open casement and watched the stars flashing out one by one as the night grew darker.

"What is indifference to God's work but the forgetting of God and God's law?" he demanded of himself, at last. "Does not sin lie at the door, then? Ah," he exclaimed, excitedly, "that is where the trouble lies. We need God."

As though by way of response, a voice came floating down through the night and instinctively Zechariah knew it was God speaking. With uplifted but reverent gaze, Zechariah whispered:

"Speak, Lord, thy message."

Again came the voice, saying: "The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore, say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts. Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings; but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the Lord. But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us."

"The Lord hath told me to speak to his people," whispered Zechariah to himself after the voice had ceased. "Can it be?" he exclaimed in rapture, "that God is calling me as prophet and priest to serve his people?"

And then by way of response he added, earnestly:

"I will speak. All the Lord hath said will I tell the people. And, Oh, that they may indeed hear the voice of God and turn to him. It is only thus that the work of the rebuilding of the temple will prosper."

So it came to pass that in the morning that Zechariah's place upon the temple walls was vacant, but Jerusalem had a new prophet whose voice was sounding throughout the city the call to repentance and urging the need of turning to God.

GIVING OUR BEST SERVICE.

However Humble in the Light of God's Love It Will Be Glorified.