

In The RELIGIOUS WORLD

THE NATIONS IN JUDGMENT

The International Sunday School Lesson for September 20 is "The Judgment of the Nations."—Matt. 25:31-46.

By William T. Ellis.

Appropriate beyond man's devising is the present Sunday School Lesson. It is a startling presentation for this present hour. A more pertinent passage of Scripture for widespread consideration could not have been chosen. It is as timely as any dispatch in the news columns.

In these great words Jesus makes it clear that nations, as well as individuals, are to be judged at the court of High Heaven. Every nation has an identity before God. The implications of this truth are many and solemnizing. They make citizenship a sacred thing, and office-holding a tremendous responsibility. Not only in the conflict and clash of nations, but also in the judgment-day of God, must every country make answer concerning its efficiency and its character. The King of kings sits in judgment upon all the kingdoms of earth.

The lesson passage itself must be printed in full:

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

The Test

If we try to read these sentences as if we had never seen them before, we find a great truth starting out from the page. It lives, and throbs, and clutches the imagination with all the pulsing reality of our own day. Here we find chiming perfectly with the most advanced Christian thinking of our time the startling proposition that nations are to be judged for their service to mankind. The brotherly qualities in nations are to be the standard by which they are finally to be appraised. Human ministry—and all that our common term "social service" implies—is the vital and determining factor in a nation's success.

Not wealth, or commercial power, or intellectual brilliance, or military glory; but the simple fact of whether men and women and little children, is the one final test of national greatness.

The Real Mission of a State.

If anybody thinks that the state has no business with social legislation—such as child welfare, the housing problem, workers' compensation, mothers' pensions and all the other host of present-day plans for lifting the burdens of life from the weakest shoulders—he needs but to read this passage over again. The Almighty God in his great judgment-day is going to hold the nations accountable for these very responsibilities.

A public official, we then say, is not merely answerable to the voters who elect him; he must give an account to the God of all nations. A sense of responsibility to a Higher Power is what calls forth the best qualities in a man. Likewise, nothing else so causes a nation to rise to its highest possibilities as the profound conviction that it must render

an accounting to the judge of all the earth.

The real mission of the state is not to create an artificial political structure; not to maintain a ruling class; not to walk pridefully amid other nations; but to serve the whole people in the fear of the Lord.

What Divides Sheep From Goats?

There are good nations and bad nations, successful nations and nations that have failed. Every mature thinker ponders this tale which history tells. He asks himself over and over again why certain nations have missed the mark.

In the light of this luminous Scripture we perceive that ministry is the mark of greatness for a nation, as for an individual. The truly "great powers" are those whose people have been best served by their government. Empires built on exploitation of the common man have always come to a disastrous end. A reasonable hope for the survival of democracy lies in the profound truth that it is established in the welfare of its citizens; a welfare that is dear to heaven as to earth.

By this present Scripture we see that the King who spoke these words, after he had been rejected and was on his way to a cross of sacrifice and service, is to be the judge of all the earth. May we not reverently suggest also, that the people so long exploited and oppressed are to sit in judgment on the mighty? For what else means this amazing declaration of the Man of Sorrows, who was touched with the feeling of the infirmities of the multitudes that he suffered in all their suffering, and was served by every service done to them?

The King and The People.

One of the marvels of this farewell admonition of the Messenger who came from God is that the King of heaven and earth identifies himself with the welfare of the common people. To serve them is to serve Him. The climax of Christ's teaching is "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

This passion for the service of Christ and his brethren, which sees the Man of Sorrows in every needy child of earth, is what makes the missionary, the reformer and the Christian worker.

So far as we can see in this farewell utterance, there is not to be much theology on the judgment-day: the deciding factors in destiny are to be the poor, the sick, the prisoner, the neglected, the widows, the fatherless and the benighted. What is done to man, is done to God.

The most tremendous of all incentives to build a nation strong and clean in its ideals, and purged of political corruption, is this teaching that the nation must make answer at last to the just Judge, who is also the compassionate Redeemer of mankind.

THE REAL SOCIALISM.

Terse Comments on the Uniform Prayer Meeting Topic of the Young People's Societies—Christian Endeavor, etc.—for September 20, "Share Your Blessings"—Heb. 13:16-21.

By William T. Ellis.

Our generation seems to have caught a vision of an order of society wherein the strong share with the weak, the rich with the poor, the wise with the ignorant. Some persons have interpreted this as political socialism; but it really is only the spirit of Christian brotherhood. This social ideal of Jesus has spread even farther than the bounds of the church; it leavens the whole world. The day's dominant note is altruism. Responsibility of those who have for those who have not is but the realization of the divine injunction, "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."

Between charity and social service there is this essential difference: one is a mere giving, and the other is a sharing. Lowell compresses the truth into the familiar lines:

"Not what we give, but what we share,—
For the gift without the giver is bare;
What gives himself with his alms feeds three,—
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me."

When shared, even five-loaves and two small fishes may feed a multitude. Nobody knows the extent of his own possibilities until he has put them to service.

The immortal heroism of Captain Scott and his companions, perishing in the search for the South Pole, was shown in nothing more clearly than in the act of the two men who went apart from their companions in order to die without causing suffering to their

comrades. They shared their soul's heroism, being bountiful with their nobility, even to the last. This spirit which thinks first of others is the essence of our topic. It appeared in the words of Jesus, when arrested in Gethsemane: "Let these go their way," he said concerning his disciples. And when in the final agonies of the Cross, the Redeemer had thought for the dying thief, for his mother, and for his murderers, all sharers of their own souls with their needy brethren thus follow in the train of the Christ of Calvary.

Among the private papers of the owner of "The Youth's Companion" Daniel Sharp Ford, whose will so nobly fulfilled his life purpose, was found the following anonymous poem:

"The bread that giveth strength I want to give;
The water pure that bids the thirsty live;

I want to help the fainting day by day;
I'm sure I shall not pass again this way.

"I want to give the oil of joy for tears,
The faith to conquer cruel doubts and fears,
Beauty for ashes may I give away;
I'm sure I shall not pass again this way.

I want to give good measure running o'er,
And into angry hearts I want to pour
The answer soft that turneth wrath away;
I'm sure I shall not pass again this way.

"I want to give to others hope and faith;
I want to do all that the Master saith;
I want to live aright from day to day;
I'm sure I shall not pass again this way."

"If only my wife could be here!" involuntarily exclaims a husband, enjoying some unusual pleasure. That is always love's first desire; to share with the beloved. By this sure test we may prove to ourselves whether our professions of love for mankind are real, or only so many fine poses and phrases. Do we sincerely desire to give of our time, our labor, our means, for the welfare of our fellows? If not, then we do not love in deed, but only in word.

The shared life is multiplied,
I said it in the meadow path,
I say it on the mountain stairs—
The best things any mortal hath
Are those which every mortal shares.
—Lucy Larcom.

A passion for neoprimness, when genuine, persists to the end. The American people will long cherish the spectacle of Mrs. Wilson, the wife of the President, thinking even on her deathbed of the poor people of the slums of Washington, and securing from Congress, as a dying boon, legislation for their betterment. Throughout her life in the White House Mrs. Wilson had administered to the needy of the capital, caring more for the fulfillment of the law of Christ that had been her life passion than for the social opportunities of her exalted position.

The finest things in the world, like a fine poem, a lovely picture, fresh air, sweet music, and a glorious sunset, cannot well be appropriated by one person; and the finer they are, the freer they are.—Amos R. Wells.

According to the conception of life expounded by Jesus, we are not owners, in fee simple, but stewards. All we possess is in trust. Our part is merely to administer our talents, in full consciousness of our responsibility to God. We share all because we owe all to him whose commandment is, "We then that are strong ought to bear the burdens of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

Not the great getters, but the great sharers, are the successful lives.

SEVEN SENTENCE SERMONS.
The only failure a man ought to fear is failure in cleaving to the purpose he sees to be best.—George Eliot.

Faith is a higher faculty than reason.—Bailey.

Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.
God's strength is always stronger than strong enough.—Christiana Ressetti.

Forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward toward the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.—Phil. 3:13, 14.

This above all, to thine own self be true;
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.—Shakespeare.

Great works are performed, not by strength, but by perseverance.—Johnston.

No two nations have the same laws regulating the handling and storage of explosives.

FINDING OF JUDGE IN NEWTON CASE

Mother Has Custody of Child But Father May See Her at Any Time

(Special to The News and Observer.)

Fayetteville, Sept. 12.—The decree of Judge Geo. W. Connor in the habeas corpus proceedings brought by J. Sprunt Newton, of this city, against his wife, Flora Eliza Newton, for the custody of their four-year-old daughter, heard in chambers by Judge Connor in Raleigh August 8th, was filed in the office of Clerk of the Court A. A. MacKethan Friday. Judge Connor, considering that the best interest of the child, Mary Elizabeth Newton, on account of her sex and age, require that she remain under the care of her mother, decrees that she be remanded to the custody of the mother, under the condition that Mr. Newton "shall at all reasonable times and under all reasonable circumstances have opportunity to be with said child and have said child with him free from interference or the presence of others, if he shall so desire, to the end that he may not only enjoy association with said child, but may also cultivate in his said child the love and affection which by nature is incident to their relation as father and child, and which is essential to the well being and happiness of both;" and directs Mrs. Newton to keep the child within the county of Cumberland and not to remove her therefrom without the written consent of J. Sprunt Newton, and further directs Mrs. Newton to permit her husband to have the custody and possession of the child at such times and under such circumstances as may be reasonable, and usual and customary for a father to have an infant daughter; and provides that "it shall not be deemed reasonable within the spirit of this order for the said J. Sprunt Newton to have or keep the said child in his possession for more than six hours at one time, nor oftener than once a day."

No Prejudice Against Father.

The most significant part of the order is section 3 of the decree, which reads: "That it will not be to the best interest of the said Mary Elizabeth Newton, but it will be prejudicial to such interest, for her to be or remain in the presence or under the influence of any person or persons who shall directly, or indirectly, by word or act, actively or passively, cause the said child to have or entertain for her father, J. Sprunt Newton, any feeling other than that of respect, love and affection; that thereupon the said Flora Eliza Newton be and she is hereby required to keep the said child at all times free from the influence of persons known to her to be hostile or unfriendly toward J. Sprunt Newton, and not to permit the said child to be or remain alone in the company of such persons, whether such persons be related to said child or not, to the end that said child shall at all times be under influences favorable to the cultivation in said child of that respect and affection for her father essential to her best interest and future happiness."

Confidence in Newton.

The hearing before Judge Connor, which was upon the return to a writ of habeas corpus issued by Chief Justice Walter Clark, was a result of the separation of Mrs. Newton (who was Miss Eliza McArthur) from her husband in August of last year on account of the strained relations existing between her husband and members of her family, consequent on the refusal of members of the McArthur family to acknowledge their alleged signatures on Mr. Newton's outstanding notes said to aggregate more than \$100,000. The decree, though, has no direct bearing on the various suits over these notes, except in so far as it tends to show the court's confidence in Mr. Newton. The decree states as a finding of fact that whether or not the separation on the part of the respondent is justified by the conduct of the petitioner in business matters is not material to the matter in controversy in this proceeding.

It is ordered that the proceeding be docketed in the office of the clerk of the Superior court so that other motions and orders may be made to protect the rights of all parties concerned.

At the time of the hearing Judge Connor indicated verbally the nature of his decision, but announced that he would not issue a formal decree until later.

POLISH WRITER CAPTURED.

London, 6:50 p. m., Sept. 12.—A dispatch to the Evening News from Petrograd says that Henry K. Seinkewicz, the Polish writer and author of Quo Vardis, who recently appealed to Poles to support Russia in the war, has been taken prisoner by the Austrians and sent to Cracow. He is about seventy years of age and always has been hostile to Austria and Germany.