

## A SPIRITUAL HARVEST

LAW OF CAUSE AND EFFECT  
WORKS HERE.

## NO WORTHY EFFORT WASTED

By Faith Sower of the Seed Sows His Future Harvest—So May Men and Women Who Work to Win Souls for Christ and Right Living—Reward of the Kindly Effort Is Sure and Certain.

Entered according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the year 1906, by Frederick Diver, Toronto, at the Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Los Angeles, Cal., Oct. 21.—In this sermon, using the familiar type of the seed sower, the preacher shows that no worthy effort at winning men and women from sin is ever wasted, but is rewarded by a spiritual harvest. The text is Ecclesiastes xii. 1, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

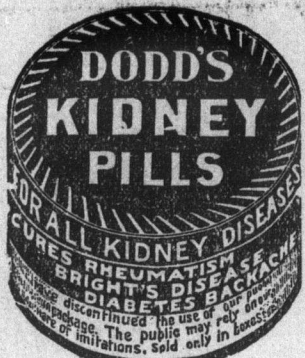
This text has been impressed on my mind ever since I journeyed around the world and came home by the land of the pharaohs. When I wandered amid the ancient ruins and stood under the shadows of its obelisks and pyramids and reflected that all these temples and palaces and monuments and tombs were the relics of the ancient race which was attracted by the fertility of the land lying along the banks of the river Nile, these words have had for me a complete fascination, for in the light of Egyptian lore I thought King Solomon was alluding to the custom with which the descendants of the ancient subjects of the Remeses are wont to sow their seed. That custom is very interesting to a traveler from this hemisphere. Egypt is a vast desert. From one end of the year to the other no rain falls on that parched soil. How, then, in the land cultivated? By the river Nile, which, when the spring freshets flow into it, rises above its banks and overflows the low lying lands on each side. Then, as the river Nile dries up again, most of the overflowing water is drawn back into the original channel and leaves the adjacent regions under a layer of thick mud, with here and there small shallow lakes and pools. Then the Egyptian farmer goes forth and scatters his seeds upon this water. The seeds sink into the mud. They take root. The next time the river Nile comes, the lands alongside of the Nile are covered with luxuriant crops.

In light of this strange custom of Egyptian agriculture I used to say: "Ah, I know what King Solomon meant when he said, 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.' He is practically saying: 'Pick out your richest grounds. Go up to the rich mud-covered fields by the Nile. Drop here and there the seed of God-given teaching. You will never find that those seeds will die. You harvests will soon yield their thirty, their sixty, their hundredfold. The ground is so rich that it is certain to bring forth a harvest.' Thus I would always picture the Christian in Egypt, this injunction as casting his seed upon rich soil and then in a few months driving up to the gospel granaries with his wagons laden with the heavy golden sheaves which he had harvested for his Master."

That is a very beautiful vision which I had about the message of my text. There was only one trouble about it. The vision was not true. When I began to look up what the Bible scholars said about this theme I found they made no allusion to the river Nile and its vast muddy banks, with their mud filled with the sower's seeds. According to Thomas Scott, this text alludes to the Palestine farmer and not to the Egyptian. It pictures a Palestine farmer scattering the seed over his fields and coming to a swampy region. It is the poorest part of his farm. He has never cultivated it before, because, when he came to it, he always said: "What is the use of my planting there? I will never get any return for my labor. My seed will only rot and never bring me back any sheaves." But Solomon says: "O farmer, go to the most unpromising parts of the farm. Scatter your good seeds amid the swampy fells, where you and all good people are skeptical about getting any return. Your gospel seeds will never be uselessly thrown away. The harvests will come. Believe me, the harvests will come." Let me read to you his very words, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." Could we have more practical advice for Christian work?

Instead of seeking the richest fields, God is here telling us to sow in the most undesirable ones. Now, as I begin to run over some of the most unpromising regions for gospel seed planting, my mind in the first place naturally turns toward the child who is born of dissolute or degraded parents. "Oh," you say as you look at him, "there is no use wasting any thing upon that boy! He was born of a bad mother. His father was divorced from her on account of her flagrant sins. She is never at home. You might as well try to change a leopard's spots as to overcome the parental taint in his blood." Or you say, "What is the use? That boy's father is a drunkard and an infidel. He daily scoffs at the Bible. Any good seed we might sow in that child's heart would be rooted out in a night by the ridicule of his parent." Yes, Sunday school teacher, I know how discouraged you are over that boy. But do not despair. God is sowing your gospel seed in that child's heart whenever you have an opportunity. Christ will look after the result. The gospel harvests in that life will surely come. Do you not recall the divine promise given to us in Ecclesiastes, "Cast thy bread upon the waters?" That means "Cast thy seed in the unpromising fields, for thou shalt find it after many days."

And why should we not cast the gospel seed upon the child heart? Have you a right to say that any child cannot be led to Christ until you have tried to lead him there not only seven times, but seventy times seven? A child's heart seems to me like the desert of Arizona. Now, there are two kinds of desert. There is the desert of sand and rock, like that of Sa-



hara. You might as well expect a dotted sieve to hold water as such a desert. You can pour rivers upon rivers into it and have shower after shower descend upon it, and those waters will almost instantly disappear. It would take centuries upon centuries of inundations to change the Sahara sands into the rich soil of a harvest field.

But such a desert as that is not to be compared to the Arizona desert. There the lands are rich beyond all human computation in all the elements that are essential to a healthy vegetable life. You could grow wheat there. You could grow corn there. You could grow the most exquisite of flowers there, if you only had water. Travelers will tell you that when the short rainy seasons come to the Arizona desert it will be literally covered with wild flowers, and the richest of grasses will spring up as if by magic. Thus I feel when I look off upon a great community, with its many children, there I do not find rocky hearts, stony hearts, flinty hearts, which cannot be touched by a Saviour's love. But, like the Arizona plains, I find rich soil just ready for the gospel sowers. Give the child a chance for God. Sow the gospel seed in the home where the parental life is not what it should be. Christ will look after the result. The harvest will surely come for his glory. Dare you deny that God's promises are true? "Cast thy bread upon the unpromising fields, and thou shalt find it after many days."

Let me open for a moment the door of your home. For whom are you chiefly living? I think your chief desire is for your children. You say to your wife: "No, Mary, I will not allow that. The children must not go." But after the supper is over your little daughter climbs up into your lap and begins to talk. The first thing you know you have not only consented for her to do what you said she might not do, but you have consented to let her take you along. "Oh, John," your wife says, "those babies can twist you about their little fingers. You have no mind of your own when they are about." Your answer: "Not at all; not at all. I always make them do what I feel is best." But tell me honestly—the children are not listening—do you not live for them? Do they not lead you anywhere they will by the string of love? Now, my friends, if your children have such an influence over you, your neighbor's children have just as much influence over him. Remember this fact—if you win a child of worldly parents to Christ, that child in all probability will lead the parents to Christ also. Oh, my brother, are not these gospel prizes worth striving for?

The easiest way to get Christ into a worldly home is to go there by the half open door of a child's heart. "Cast thy bread upon the child's heart, and thou shalt find it after many days." But another unpromising field for gospel seed planting is the besotted life of the man or woman who for years and years has been living the life of a degenerate or a social outcast. When you think of them you invariably say: "They are Ephraims wedded to their sins. Leave them alone. They have

had their moral characters absolutely driven out of them. When the ear drum is gone there is no hope in going to a specialist. He will have nothing to work upon. The hearing, in that case, can never be restored. So is it with the degenerates. It is useless to cast pearls before the swine. Back into the ditch they will go. It is useless to read the Ten Commandments to a flock of human wolves. Only upon the carcasses of sin will they banquet. All that you can do is to leave them to gormandise at their corrupt and disgusting feasts."

Well, my brother, what you say may be true. Ephraim may be wedded to his sins. But, when you go forth to sow gospel seed and are tempted to leave Ephraim's land unsown, be very sure that it is really swamp land. Perhaps you may be making a mistake. Perhaps you are hastily passing judgment of condemnation upon men whom God has not yet given up as hopeless. What I do know is this: If you had lived in Christ's place many of the sinners and the outcasts with whom he talked you would never have spoken to for fear of defiling your garments. Many of the thieves and robbers and the libertines and the moral lepers whom he lifted out of their sins you would never have touched. You would have said, "It is useless to try to change them. They are degenerate. They are Ephraims wedded to their sins. Leave them alone." You had better be careful when you refuse to scatter the gospel seed in the shriveled heart of an outcast. Even there Christ will bless your sowing. Yes, he will bless you when you plead with a devil-possessed Mary, or with a libertine and a murderer like David, or with a hard-hearted tax collector like Zacchaeus, or with even an adulteress like the woman of Samaria. Your gospel seed planting will never go astray. No matter how unpromising the human field which you sow, those seeds will never be lost. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

An impressive parable found among the Hindoos is the following: Many years ago a thief was captured with stolen money in his hand and sentenced to die. The night before his execution he devised this novel plan for rescue: He called the jailer into his cell and said, "Go tell the king that I am come to him. I can tell him how to grow gold." The intelligence was carried to the king, and he said, "Let the culprit be brought before me." When the thief entered the royal presence he produced a piece of gold and said: "Your majesty, if this piece of gold be planted in the soil it will grow into a tree, every branch of which will be laden with gold, as an orchard with fruit. But this golden seed must be planted by a hand which has never been stained by a dishonest act. Of course I am a thief and cannot plant this seed. My hand is not clean, so I pass it to your majesty." The king looked at the gold a moment; then he said: "I would plant it if I could; but, alas, my hand is not clean. I will pass it to my prime minister." The prime minister's hand was not clean, so he passed it to the governor of the citadel. The governor's hand was not clean, and he passed it to the high priest. The high priest's hand was not clean, and he passed it on to another.

Thus the golden seed went from hand to hand. Then the thief said, "Your majesty, if no man's hand is clean, why should I alone die for the crime?" "You are right," said the king. "If you are to die, then I must die also." Then the conscience-stricken king pardoned the culprit because he and his officers were all sinners alike. Is the story a mere legend, a fable? I think not. We say certain men are degenerate and beyond the pale of gospel hope. Are they? Have we always been pure? Have we never sinned? Are we not sinning now? Oh, my Lord and my God, if thou canst save us, the chief of sinners, cannot thou save even the lowest and the vilest daily lives who come in contact with thee? Yes, even the lowest and the vilest the Lord Jesus can save. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

But the next unpromising field for gospel seed planting to which my mind turns naturally is the bitter hearts of the persons who for years and years have been identified with Christian works, whose labors were unappreciated by their contemporaries and who have been cast out or, rather, frozen out of the churches with which they were identified. Some of these men and women now are among the most bitter of all enemies of the churches. There are hundreds and thousands of men and women who despise the church of God because some Christian friend or some church has proved false to them. They despise the church of God, which they once loved, because some man or body of men has been unappreciative of their loyalty and self-sacrifice. Now, my friends, it is your duty and my duty to go after these delinquent church members. We must go after them. We must harness them up to the gospel chariot again and get them to pull. I know it will be hard to bring them back. I know it is an unpromising field for gospel seed planting, but if we go forth in the night spirit, with the right gospel seed, we can get a harvest even in this unpromising soil. Remember the words of my text, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

But, lastly I think of one of the hardest of all fields in which to sow the gospel seed. That is the stony heart of the man who has stilled the pleadings of his conscience by accepting "a religion or a creed which will allow him to give free rein to his evil desires and not feel that he is doing wrong. And these liberal religions or false creeds are everywhere. There are so many of them that I cannot name them. At least one of them will satisfy almost any condition of sinful life and gratify every evil desire. Some of them will allow you to yield to all your desires and appetites. Some will let you live the most selfish of lives. There is no need of my going into details. I mean the creed which will allow a man to turn his back upon wife and children and start a social community where he can defy the domestic laws and where the laws of purity are so liberal, so utterly lax, that they will allow men to do almost anything they will. Now, my friends, we are to fight against the sins of these men and women who stifle the pleadings of conscience by false creeds? Simply by gospel seed planting. I know the stony hearts of these transgressors are unpromising for

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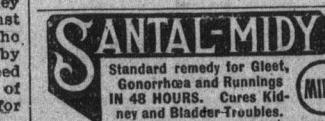
a rich harvest, but remember God's seeds can bring forth their hundredfold harvest even in places where you may think a gospel sower can never be gathered. But I cannot close without asking this one pertinent question: Is it not a fact, after all, my brother, that the reason you have not been a gospel sower in the unpromising fields of life is because you do not hold the good seed in a field and a sower if that sower has no seed to scatter? Friend, why art thy hands empty? Is it because thou hast not yet been consecrated to the service of Jesus Christ? Will thou receive seed for the work of his holy spirit? Will thou dig thy empty hands down into the hilt of God's promises and bring them up full, and then plant the seed in thy own stony heart, and then scatter them over the floor of the neighbor's hearts? May God help me as I now take a handful of his everlasting promises. May I lift these promises as gospel seeds and go up and down among my people and say: "Friend, this seed is for thee. This seed is for thee. Will thou receive these gospel seeds and plant them in thine own heart and here and now fit thyself as a gospel sower for Christ? Will thou, friend? Art thou ready now to be his sower? 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.'"



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## FRIBBLES OF FASHION.

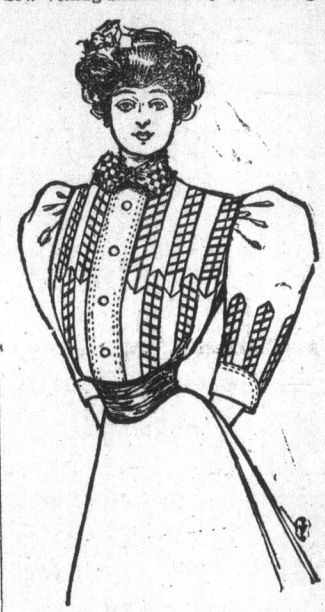
Taffeta Silk is Making Smart Fall Waists—Dainty Swiss Matinee.

Soft taffeta silk in plain effects and checks is making charming shirt waists to be worn with coat and shirt suits. Plain silk waists are piped with check, and vice versa. For example, a green and white checked waist is given character by a yoke trimming in the form of a two inch bias band of the waist material edged with corded pipings of plain green silk set with small silk covered buttons.

A particularly smart matinee of the lingerie order is made of dotted swiss. The petticoat is simply finished, the three flounces having embroidered scalloped edges, under which are set little frills of narrow valenciennes lace. The sack hangs straight and slightly full from a little yoke and is finished with a scalloped border and lace frill. A dainty feature is an oddly shaped collar embroidered by hand in a simple design.

Some of the fall cloth walking suits have a suggestion of the Norfolk and pony jackets in their coats. But the new coat fits closer than the spring pony jacket.

Several narrow bias ruffles about two inches wide, with a hem stitched on the right side, trim many of the new velling skirts. They are arranged



BOULSE OF BROWN SILK.

In five or six rows around the bottom or in a graduated scallop pattern beginning six inches above the hem.

In some of the new checked materials there is an introduction of dots in a deeper color than the material. They are grouped in little set figures, which give the checks a world of character. The blouse pictured is a fall design of the severe type. The material is soft finished taffeta in a gray brown tint. The bands are of checked silk and the buttons enameled affairs in gold and brown tones.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

## FORECAST OF FASHION.

Wide Plaited Skirt in Vogue—Suppleness a Characteristic of Fabrics.

There is more than a hint as to what the fall fashions are to be—in fact, many women have already purchased their autumn suits. The wide plaited skirt to be seen on many costumes looks like an old friend, while the short jacket with long, rounded front was a favorite a few years ago.

Both smooth and rough materials are being used, but in either case suppleness is a characteristic very much emphasized, and duller rather more somber coloring is popular.

Some of the fall suits have waists to match the skirt, making a simple three



piece affair, but what is more worn is a silk or cloth shirt waist in the dominating color of the suit.

White or colored mohair is very appropriate for a "dress up" costume to be taken to boarding school by the small student.

Skirts so far are either plaited or circular, although the latter cut will not be so popular on account of its bad habit of sagging. Many of the new skirts are trimmed with circular ruffles, which give the cutaway effect so well liked this fall.

Jackets in most instances are hip length, but few of them hang loose, as the pony jacket invariably does. They have, in a number of cases, tiny vests and also ruffled basque effects. The hat in the cut is designed for theater wear. The brim is composed of geranium flowers put as close together as possible. The leaves form the crown. Coral colored ribbon is arranged in loops at the back.

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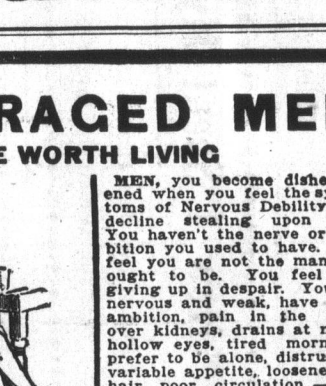
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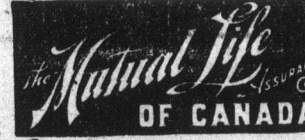
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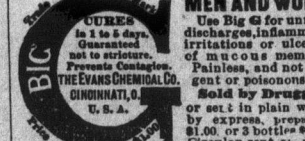
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