

treacherous act. *Gather them up*; pull up the weeds by the roots, as was, and is, ordinarily done in Palestine. The servants were watchful, but unwise.

V. 29. *Nay*; emphatic. *Lest*. The risk was that wheat and tares be uprooted together, their roots being intertwined and having firm hold of the soil.

### III. The Reaping Time, 30.

V. 30. *Let both grow*; this is the main point in the interpretation of the parable, vs. 39-43. *Gather. first*. Before or after the crop was cut? Immaterial, for the wheat was now ripe.

### IV. What It All Means, 36-43.

V. 36. *Left the multitudes* (Rev. Ver.); correct reading, as context shows. *The house*; probably His temporary home at Capernaum. *Declare*; Rev. Ver., "explain." The language of intimate intercourse. *The parable of the tares*. This seemed to them the most important of the three, vs. 24-33.

Vs. 37-39. The sower is *the Son of man* Himself. Not so identified in the interpretation of the Parable of the Sower. This title was frequently applied by our Lord to Himself. It implies Messiahship, and refers to Him as humanity's new Head and Representative. *The world*; not the narrower area of Judaism. Universal religion. *Good seed*; not the Word this time, but *sons of the kingdom* (Rev. Ver.), His true followers,—they who had the spiritual characteristics of His kingdom. *Children of the wicked one*; that is, of the devil. They who are dominated by the spirit of evil, and represent his character and influence. *End of the world*; or "consummation of the age"—a phrase found only in Matthew. In Jewish thought, the day of judgment was to be the dividing line between this æon (age) and the coming one. *Reapers. .angels*. See Matt. 24 : 31,—ministers to fulfil God's judgments. As the main point of the parable is the separation at the harvest, the agents in this separation are named.

Vs. 40-42. *So shall it be*; a final separation. *The Son of man shall send*; our Lord thus claims superiority to and lordship over, the angels who are "ministering spirits" (see Heb. 1 : 14). *Gather*; collect, and so separate. *All things that offend*; Rev. Ver., "that

cause stumbling"—abstract for concrete. All who create stumbling-blocks for others. *Which do iniquity*; or, "lawlessness." (See ch. 7 : 23.) Not "antinomians", in the strict sense, but all who morally transgress. The children of the wicked one, mentioned in v. 38. *A furnace*; Rev. Ver., "the furnace." Some hold that this refers to the well-known figure of future punishment, and is equivalent to "the Gehenna of fire." Others find in it a reference to the ancient custom of execution by cremation (2 Sam. 12 : 31; Jer. 29 : 22; Dan. 3 : 6). *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*. For a moment Jesus passes beyond the limits of the parable to add this terrible clause that shows the tokens of rage and despair. The expression occurs also in ch. 8 : 12, where the doom is rejection into the outer darkness.

V. 43. *Shine forth*; a quotation from Dan. 12 : 3, used here to point to the new and eternal phase of the kingdom of heaven, when believers shall enjoy the full privilege of sons. *As the sun*; as it emerges from behind a cloud. The phrase is a very strong one. *Let him hear*. The meaning of this solemn conclusion is not, as is frequently supposed, let every one listen; but rather let every one who has spiritual discernment attend to this utterance.

### Light from the East

TARES—In Canada and in Britain, "tares" is the common name of vetches which are often sown for green fodder. But here it means the bearded darnel, a pernicious weed, very like wheat when it is in the blade, but very different when the head is out. The kernel is black, bitter, and poisonous and greatly depreciates wheat in value. Women and children are employed to pull it up just before harvest, because earlier it is not easily distinguished, and when the wheat is in the milk, any disturbance of its roots is injurious to it. Sometimes it is left until the harvest, separated by hand and laid in different bundles from the wheat. After the grain is threshed and winnowed, it is sifted in a sieve that lets through the darnel and holds the wheat. Farmers think wheat will turn into darnel, because fields where they sowed