

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

MAY 25.

LIBERAL GIVING.

I COR. 9: 1-15.

Verses 1-4.—The apostle refers here to the collection for the poor Christians at Jerusalem, made in all the Gentile churches (Acts 11: 29, 30), and ultimately carried to Jerusalem by St. Paul and certain appointed deputies (Acts 24: 17). A famine had been predicted by Agabus (a prophet), but there can be no doubt that, partly through their own liberality at the beginning, and partly through the fierce persecution they had had to encounter, they were much worse off than most of their brethren in Gentile cities. The Corinthians had shown themselves most ready to promise contributions to this collection, but had evidently been somewhat slow in fulfilling these promises. They had displayed so generous a spirit at the time that the Apostle had boasted of them in other places, and by their example stirred up many to a liberality which would not otherwise have been manifested. Now he gently reminds them that their credit was at stake. Having previously used them to stir up the Macedonians, he now uses the Macedonians to stir them up.

5. This verse in the Revised Version brings the meaning out much more clearly. Instead of "whereof ye had notice before," we read "before promised bounty;" and instead of "of conspicuousness," we read "of liberality." The apostle exhorts for having sent brethren to collect their contributions says that he was anxious that it should appear, when he came, to be a voluntary offering, and not one which he had extorted from them by the exercise of his authority.

6. Here is laid down a principle literally true in material things. If a farmer sows his fields with a niggardly regard to the quantity of seed, he cannot expect an abundant crop. So with charitable gifts. What is given grudgingly—pared down to the smallest possible amount—will never bring the same reward as that which is given liberally. The ground is fertile, the seed is good, and the farmer sows with a niggardly regard to the quantity of seed, he cannot expect an abundant crop. So with charitable gifts. What is given grudgingly—pared down to the smallest possible amount—will never bring the same reward as that which is given liberally. The ground is fertile, the seed is good, and the farmer sows with a niggardly regard to the quantity of seed, he cannot expect an abundant crop. So with charitable gifts. What is given grudgingly—pared down to the smallest possible amount—will never bring the same reward as that which is given liberally.

7. Here is a direct exhortation as to the spirit in which we should give, either to the poor or to God's cause. "Every man according as he hath purposed in his heart;" but in another place the apostle shows the rule which this purpose should be guided by. "As God hath prospered him (I Cor. xvi. 2.) Gifts should be proportionate to means. The widow's mite was more in the estimation of our Saviour than all the larger gifts of the rich men who, out of their abundance, gave only that which they would never miss. "The deceitfulness of riches" often binds the possessor to a sense of his real duty in this matter. The splendid examples of liberality among the wealthy are rather the exception than the rule; and it is all well that the Lord has prospered them, the cause of Christ would advance with much more rapid strides. And the giving to be acceptable must be cheerful. "For God loveth a cheerful giver." All our people should learn the right mode of giving, namely, to lay by some proportion of their earnings as a fund to be used for sacred and benevolent purposes. Then they will always have something to give, however little it may be; and it will give them more cheerfully, and will derive much more satisfaction from it than their giving were done in the haphazard manner so common.

8-14.—The apostle enumerates at length the advantages and rewards of such giving. There are three points on which St. Paul enlarges: 1. The abundant blessings God will bestow on them. It is not only a doctrine of Scripture, but a matter of experience, that God rewards liberality by increased prosperity. But it is rather the abundance of His grace, in return for such liberality, that the apostle dwells on here. 2. The bounty, both to themselves and to God. Whoever by any means produces a spirit of thankfulness in his fellow-men adds to the sum of human happiness. For thankfulness always conduces to happiness. 3. The prayers of the recipients. To be remembered in the prayers of Christ's people is no mean blessing, and it is one which will always follow those who are generous to the poor and needy (verse 15). The apostle concludes by passing abruptly from his own benevolence to that which is his source and cause. This his going on enlarges, and fervent feelings break out in a fervent exclamation. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." Such language can only refer to the gift of the only begotten Son of God. It is one of those sinners, so abundant in the writings of this great apostle, which are of the nature of operations. His comprehensive mind saw connections between minor truths of which he might be discoursing, and the higher, grander truths of Christianity, which do not at first sight strike the ordinary reader; and thus there sometimes appears a disconnectedness in his writings, simply because the connection is so very subtle, refined, lofty, and beautiful, that we fail to perceive it.—W. M. S. S. May.

HOW TO COOK WATER.

I must tell you the old story of how the late Charles Delmonico used to talk about the new water cure. He said the Delmonicos were the first to recommend it to guests who complained of having no appetite. "Take a cup of hot water and lemon and you will feel better," was the formula adopted, and the cup of hot water and the lemon juice in it takes away the insipidity. For this antibilious remedy the caterers charged the price of a drink of their best liquors—twenty-five cents or more—and it certainly was a wiser way to spend small change than in alcohol. "Few people know how to cook water," Charles used to affirm. "The secret is in putting good, fresh water into a neat kettle, already quite warm, and set the water to boiling quickly, and then taking it right off for use in tea, coffee and other drinks before it is spoiled. To let it steam and simmer and evaporate until the good water is all in the atmosphere, and the lime and iron and dregs only left in the kettle—bah! that is what makes a great many people sick, and is worse than no water at all." Every lady who reads this valuable recipe of a great and careful cook should never forget how to cook water.—L.

HILLS AND NO HILLS.

On this subject of hilling or not hilling potatoes, a correspondent of the *Country Gentleman* says: "Several years ago I became a convert to flat culture for potatoes, and every season convinces me that this mode is preferable to the forming of hills around the plants. This season, being a very moist one in this section, fully demonstrated with me that in moist as well as dry seasons flat culture is the better of the two. Just across the fence from my potato patch was a field of my neighbor's of about four acres, planted about ten days before mine. The ground is alike on both patches—clayey loam. My neighbor manured more liberally than I did. He adopted the hilling method of culture, and I the flat method. In the early part of the season his made a more vigorous growth than mine; in fact, the foliage in his field covered the ground before mine had begun to grow. As the season advanced mine gained in growth upon his, and maintained greener foliage longer. His ripened about a week ahead of mine, but while his crop averaged 180 bushels to the acre, mine averaged 250 bushels to the acre. There was seventy bushels difference, upon soil similar, his having the advantage of more manure than mine. I consider that flat culture requires less labor than hilling, produces heavier crops, and the quality is just as good, with all conditions the same.

USEFUL HINTS.

How about a few strawberry plants this year?

To prevent hair falling out, wet it thoroughly once or twice a week with a weak solution of salt water.

Kid boots may be nicely cleaned with a mixture of oil and ink; the oil softens the leather, and the ink blackens it.

There are many fruit trees in the country barren, from neglect and starvation, and sick from cold wet feet, and some are not worth much trouble.

London purple is better adapted to fighting the canker worm on apple trees than Paris green. It dissolves in water, which is not the case with green, and the former is therefore more evenly distributed.

If there is no vegetable plot do have one this year, put it among the potatoes or turnips, and cultivate it. You can buy young plants, cabbage, cucumbers, etc., cheaper than raising in hot bed, though it is easy and cheap to start them in boxes, in kitchen windows.

Strawberries require an open soil. Leaves from the woods are good. Do not work the soil with the hoe too close to the plant. The strawberry plant may be vigorous, but it is a delicate plant that needs as much covering as a wallflower at a ball. It needs it, all the same, and may deceive you unless you are tenderly polite to it.

A German physician speaks highly of the use of soft soap as a local application for sores or glandular swellings, abscesses, discharging canals, and cavities, felonis, etc. It is not a new remedy by any means, but one which seems likely to be neglected where it might be of real service. Quite a pleasant preparation can be made by dissolving the soap in a little Cologne water.—Dr. Fiedt's Health Monthly.

In top grafting large trees the work should not be done at once, as cutting off all the limbs in one season will be too much of a shock, and can not fail to permanently injure the tree. For a tree of ten years old or thereabouts, the grafting should occupy three years, beginning with the very highest branches, and ending with the lowest, grafting one-third of the tree each year. An efficient large tree a good plan is to graft winter fruit on the higher branches, and summer fruit on the lower ones. The latter will be ripe and gone a month and more before picking time; and the vitality of the tree will be directed to the perfecting of the former, which will show a marked improvement.—Western Ad.

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