

Our Contributors.

GRUMBLE, GRUMBLE, GROWL.

BY KNOXONIAN.

A young gentleman in one of our Ontario towns has a first-class song on the habit of complaining, which he sings at concerts with good effect. The last line of each verse is, "Grumble, grumble, growl." The gentleman has a rich bass voice, pure in tone and of considerable power. When he renders the last line—swings around on the home stretch, as the sporting reporters would say—he puts on a spurt, and the effect is good. The grumblers in the audience feel ashamed of themselves, and that is the right kind of feeling for them to have.

Talmage says that with some people the working days of the week are a six days' grumble, and the Sabbath a half-sanctified whine. This testimony is true, and the worst feature of the case is that chronic grumblers never know when they do grumble. They grumble instinctively. They grumble naturally. They grumble as naturally as they breathe. Their mouths take on a grumbling shape. The mouth of a chronic grumbler has a peculiar kind of droop at each corner. We have seen good men whose mouths had a slight droop at one corner because they used their briar-root too much in that corner. They did not distribute the pressure evenly over the whole orifice. But the mouth of a chronic grumbler takes on a shape peculiar to itself. In fact his whole face takes on a grumbling expression. The moment you look at him every feature seems to say

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It is a singular and shameful fact that a large proportion of the grumbling is done in the best places of the world, and by the people who have most reason to be thankful. Men dangerously ill do not, as a rule, complain half as much as men in good health. Dying men rarely complain. They may be troubled about the past and anxious about the future, but as a rule they do not grumble. It is, we believe, an actual fact that convicts in prisons and penitentiaries do not grumble as much as many men who are at liberty. Courts of law are places that try men's souls, but you hear very little grumbling there. The court would instantly shout "silence" to a grumbler if he began to unload his grievances. The grumbling is usually done in good places. A fine, well-managed store, where people buy and sell with mutual advantage is a good, pleasant place, but there is much grumbling done in stores. A farm with its freedom and pure air, its ample supply of the necessities of life, its scores of blessings that can be enjoyed nowhere else, is a good place, but you can find many chronic grumblers on fine farms, and some of them seem to have a hundred horse-power engine concealed about their person. Some of them work the engine tremendously when you ask them for a subscription to the Schemes of the Church.

There are not many better things in this country than a sail in a good steamer on one of our magnificent lakes or rivers. And yet you hear any number of people grumble in the finest boats on our most beautiful waters. It is "grumble, grumble, growl," about berths, or about places at the table, or about something or another. Women put in a fair share of this work on steamboats.

There is a vast amount of grumbling on railway trains. An ordinary railway train will run a distance in three or four hours that used to take the old stage coaches about three days. A man who used to make the journey in three days on the old coach—who many a time helped to pry the coach out of the mud with a rail from the nearest fence, who had his bones nearly pounded into jelly by riding over corduroy bridges, will often be found grumbling because a train is twenty minutes behind time.

Some ministers allow themselves to fall into the habit of grumbling. They feel the lack of help in their work and the cruel pinching of genteel poverty in their homes. They know that the people who treat them coldly and meanly promised to give them support and encouragement. Instead of encouragement they meet with opposition or perhaps a treacherous, patronizing kind of help, which is a thousand times harder to endure than open, manly opposition. Who can blame them if they at times give way to com-

plaining? Poverty they could endure; hard work they would cheerfully do, but facing and fighting the opposition of men who are under just as solemn obligations to work for the good of the congregation as the minister is under, is a severer kind of trial, and the minister gives way under it and begins to complain. That may be a natural thing to do, but it is the worst thing possible. Constant complaining would soon crush a minister who had no trouble on his hands. How can one stand it who is already overloaded? Grumbling makes matters worse. It alienates friends without conciliating opponents. But what is a minister so situated to do? Suffer in silence? Yes, a thousand times better to suffer in silence than degenerate in a chronic grumble. "Suffer and be strong" is not a bad motto. A man may suffer and preserve his self-respect, but he can't preserve his self-respect and peddle his grievances.

The worst kind of grumbling is home grumbling. In fact a house in which there is much grumbling done should never be called a home. It may be a fine house, but it is not a home. A man who has a chronic grumbler for a wife has no home. He may have an establishment for the maintenance of which he is bound to provide funds, but he has no home. One of the hardest laws in any Christian country is the law which compels a hard working man to provide money to keep a hen-pecking mill running to the tune of "Grumble, grumble, growl." It is grumble, grumble, growl in the morning; grumble, grumble, growl at noon; and grumble, grumble, growl in the evening. The mill runs all the time, and of course the unfortunate man who supplies the funds soon becomes pecked beyond recognition. And if one lady reader of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN feels indignant at these lines, let her ask herself how she would like her own son to be compelled to furnish funds for the running of a hen-pecking establishment, where the music is always grumble, grumble, growl. Yes, ladies, the contributor will accept your verdict on the question when the question is put in that way. You know the labour and anxiety and suffering expended on the early life of that boy. None do know but you and your Maker. You know how anxiously you watched his progress toward manhood, how you laboured and prayed for him, how you helped him in his efforts to make a place for himself in the world. Your heart overflowed with gratitude and joy when you saw him succeed perhaps beyond his or your expectations. Now he is a rising young man, has a good place among his fellow men, and would soon go high if he had fair-play. He has a home, no, a house—of his own that you and he hoped he would be happy in, but your long expectations and his are strangled because the one who should be the light and comfort of that house does little but

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THE SECOND ADVENT

(Continued.)

Your correspondent seeks to find support for the premillennial theory in Luke xx 34-36, 1 Cor. xv. 23, 1 Thes. iv. 16-17, and Phil. iii. 10. It is quite unnecessary to deal with these texts separately and at length. It is sufficient to observe that they all relate to the general resurrection, but to that event viewed simply in its relation to the righteous. In connection with the first of these texts our Lord tells us that the children of this world marry and are given in marriage, whereas the children of the world to come, the world that succeeds the resurrection, do neither. Your correspondent again appeals to the Greek word *aion*, here translated world, and contends that it means age or dispensation, and that by the children of this world are meant the children of this age, and by the children of the world to come, the children of the day of millennial glory which, in opposition to the uniform teaching of Scripture, it is alleged, will succeed this present age or dispensation. I have already said something in relation to the New Testament usage of the word *aion*. Sometimes it signifies the world, either regarded in the broadest and most extensive signification of the term, or viewed in its connection with the Gospel dispensation which will be the last dispensation of grace and peace it will ever witness, its end will be the end of the world also. Viewed in the latter acceptance, it is eminently appropriate and suggestive. The Gospel dispensation, now limited in its sway, will yet extend to

all the world. The Gospel will be preached to all nations. The Jews and the heathen nations of the earth will alike be gathered within the fold of Christ. In a word, the world will become the Church, filled with the knowledge and vocal with the praise of Him by whom its redemption has been accomplished. Again, it signifies the world of glory, that world that shall be the home of the redeemed for ever. In support of these explanatory statements, I beg to cite the following illustrative texts, in addition to those furnished in my first letter. "Who gave Himself for our sins that he might deliver us from the present evil world" (*aion*), Gal. i. 4. "Teaching us that we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world" (*aion*), Titus ii. 12. "And in the world (*aion*) to come eternal life," Mark x. 30. "And have tasted the powers of the world (*aion*) to come," Heb. vii. 5. From a survey of all the texts adduced, I feel thoroughly warranted in affirming that when the Scriptures speak of *the end of the world*—age, it is the premillennialists will have it so—and connect with it the second coming of our Lord, as well as other final issues, they speak of the end of all things, the last day see John vi. 39, and xi. 24, "The absolute end, the end of history," the passing away of heaven and earth. I feel, moreover, fully entitled to affirm, that when the Scriptures speak of *the world to come*, they speak not of an age of millennial glory that is to succeed in this world the present dispensation of grace but the eternal world, where "saints in glory stand, bright, bright as day."

Let us now glance for a moment at Rev. xx. 1-5, a passage to which your correspondent continually resorts as the one impregnable fortress of premillennialism. It is claimed that the 5th verse distinctly records the fact of a first resurrection—the resurrection of the saints to reign with Christ a thousand years. In the 4th verse John states that he saw "the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God." When he says that he saw souls, I think we are bound to believe what he says. This, however, your correspondent seems unwilling to do. The Greek word here translated souls is *psuchai*, and your correspondent contends that, according to common, as well as Scripture usage, he is entitled to regard it as expressive of full personality bodies as well as souls. It is readily conceded that, like the word souls in English, it had a variety of applications, and was sometimes employed to designate the whole person. Yet we cannot help saying that your correspondent's illustrations are singularly unfortunate. When we say of a man who has lived a Christian life when he dies that he is gone to heaven and in the same breath that he was buried in the cemetery, in neither case do we refer to the fulness of his personality. We assuredly do not mean to say, in the one case, that his body as well as his soul has gone to heaven; or in the other, that his soul as well as his body was buried in the cemetery. Nor is your correspondent's Scripture illustration less unhappy—"In Acts xxvii. 37, we read: There were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls (*psuchai*). Clearly the word *psuchai* means here a complete personality, including both body and soul." Quite so, yet even here the idea of the soul is the prominent one. What, however, we wish specially to notice, is that the two forms of expression are very different. If the statement in the Acts had been constructed similarly to the one in the Apocalypse and Luke had said that "the souls of them that were in the ship," etc., I venture to say that most people would have regarded him as speaking only of the souls of those of whom he makes mention. John says that he saw souls—the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God. Can there be any doubt that it is souls alone that he speaks of, especially when it is remembered that he saw them in their disembodied state—absent from the body, present with the Lord in the world of glory? He proceeds with the narrative of his visions, and tells us that the souls whom he saw lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. Clearly, the seer does not mean to tell us that the souls of whom he speaks should leave the world of glory, and reanimating the bodies in which they were tabernacled, should reign with Christ upon the earth for a thousand years. He is careful to prevent us from falling into such a mistake, and to inform us that, whilst in describing those of whom he writes as living and reigning with Christ upon th-