

Meditations on the Lord's Supper

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N.B.—These meditations are intended to be non-controversial. They follow the account of the Lord's Supper given in St. John 13-17. For the general idea the writer is indebted to his father, the Rev. C. H. Waller, D.D. He has given the greater part of them on different occasions in church and found them helpful to himself. They are set forth here with the earnest prayer that they may be helpful to others, and encourage a fuller and more frequent use of the Holy Communion.

MEDITATION No. III.

THE QUESTIONS—ST. JOHN 13, 21:38.

The Lord's Supper was a time when the Disciples would ask questions of their Master. Let us examine the questions. (1) the question about the traitor. Lord, who is it? This question was asked by St. Peter through St. John and received an answer indicating Judas. The question itself was prompted by the Lord announcing, "One of you shall betray me." It suggests self examination, "Lord, is it I?" It is a warning to us all. Probably Judas' sin was the outcome of a series of acts of speculation. He never intended to go so far. The warning of his fall is surely intended as a warning to us all. (2) St. Peter again asked the next questions: "Lord, whither goest Thou?" and in regard to the answer to that, "Why cannot I follow Thee now?" Neither question was answered directly. In reply to the first, Jesus said: "Whither I go thou canst not follow me now." In reply to the second, He foretold the denial by Peter. Peter thought he was ready to go with Jesus even to death. Jesus knew Peter's character better than he knew it himself and warned him that He would deny Him thrice. Surely these two questions and that already considered drive us back to our Catechism and again to St. Paul's injunction. What is required of them that come to the Lord's Supper? To examine themselves, etc. Let a man so examine himself and so let him eat, etc. Had Judas been the only one of the apostolic band who failed we might have thought too little of the warning. We might have said, "He is an exception, the Devil entered into him. There cannot be a second Judas." Perhaps not, but St. Peter's case provides another warning. How often we fail to testify to our knowledge of Jesus Christ for fear of men. In the Brotherhood of St. Andrew there is a collect which begins: Heavenly Father, Thou knowest the cowardliness and weakness of my heart. Is there any worker for Jesus who has not had cause to repent, and to repent bitterly, of lost opportunities? Opportunities lost because of the cowardice of our hearts? Is not the tendency of most of us to live our lives in compartments? In the world we are of the world and conform to the fashions and standards of the world. In the Church we are religious and conform to the standards of the Church. Later, after Pentecost, in Acts 4, we read of the boldness of Peter and John and how the council took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. The Lord's Supper is intended to give us courage by bringing us to meet in Spirit face to face with Jesus Christ and living in the consciousness of His Abiding Presence to have the courage to speak to men and women for Him. Experience proves that our fears are often groundless, that when we do speak to men and women about their relation to Jesus they are ready to meet us half-way. But experience also teaches that only by living in the Presence of Jesus do we find the open doors of opportunity and have the words given to us.

Spectator

Comments on Matters of Interest from Week to Week.

"Spectator" attended a few sessions of a Public School Teachers' Convention not long ago and was impressed with one or two features of that educational assembly. In the first place, the extreme youth of about seventy-five or eighty per cent. of the teachers suggested much. Here is an important community, including the area of two populous Ontario counties, entrusting the intellectual training of the childhood and youth of the country to those who have had little experience in instruction and no experience in fatherhood or motherhood. In this situation he could easily see that even in Ontario, which, in some respects, has been an educational leader among the provinces of the Dominion, teaching is still a fugitive livelihood and not a profession. The impulse of economy is still stronger in the hearts of the people than the vision of sound learning, of intellectual enjoyment, of cultured speech and manners. The value set upon the services of teachers is so meagre that few continue in the service beyond the first favourable opportunity to step into something else. Over and over again the truism rings in our ears that of all the manifold and valued resources of this country, incomparably the most precious is the manhood and womanhood of the same. We have a commission of the Dominion appointment charged with the conservation of forests, water-powers, minerals and other things of material value. Are we showing equal solicitude for the development of our resources in humanity on the intellectual, and, above all, on the personality side of our riches? The stream of mere children from our High Schools entering the teaching craft and then making their exit before they have reached full maturity is one of the certain signs that the childhood of our country hasn't yet taken its rightful place in the plans of our leaders. The anything-will-do-for-children theory is far too prevalent. Economy in the character and calibre of teachers is the most unpardonable squandering of resources that a country can be guilty of perpetrating.

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Another feature of the assembly referred to was the absence of any consideration of those higher things of life, the way in which boys and girls of school age regard their relations to others, and the place of duty in their youthful outlook. How to find a royal road to learning and wisdom, how to make fractions a joy to youth, and geography as interesting as the movies—such, in some measure, seem to be the ambitions of teachers. To be wise without effort, and to be rich without toil, to be honest because it is profitable, and to be pious if it is pleasant—that appears to represent the ethics of the day in many quarters. It should be a standing phase of every teachers' convention to have a paper and discussion upon the ethical and spiritual side of education, using these terms in their broader significance. We have never heard the subject of the ethics of the playground discussed by our educators, and yet there, perhaps, more than anywhere else, is the characteristic inclination of child character manifested, and there, above all other places, may the higher ideal of life be inculcated. The trite remark of a great warrior to the effect that the decisive battles of the world are won

on the playgrounds of the nation's schools may be applied to those still more decisive battles of righteousness and truth within. The spirit of fair play; the spirit that impels youth to "play the game," and not some selfish variation of the same; the spirit of give and take, not with reluctance but good cheer—these are some of the important lessons of the playground, and the skilled instructors will be there to observe and unobtrusively direct. The writer knows one school at least where these principles are followed. In this school boys are presumed to play when it is play-time, and they have to be excused from games for cause, just as they may be excused from lessons. Under such a system play may sometimes assume the appearance of work, but it is an exceedingly important thing, physically, that young people should get the proper exercise out of doors, and it is equally important that they should be taught that they are not at liberty to spoil the pleasure of their neighbours simply because they have a preference for doing something else at the moment. The great sin of the age is selfishness, and, knowingly or unknowingly, the churches, schools, and public benefactors are conspiring to minister to the selfish element in humanity. The universal remedy for vice is to make virtue more attractive and enjoyable. The ideal of the school is to make its lessons so interesting that no one will think of playing truant or stealing off to the picture show. The remedy for empty pews is to make the music and the sermons of the church so delightful that people will go to church because it is the most enjoyable place to be. "Spectator" doesn't wish to be misunderstood. He isn't pleading for gloom and terror to shadow the path of the virtuous, but he does feel that the appeal now made is growingly an appeal to selfishness. We have to exalt duty, to stir the heroic in our boys, and restore to some extent the knightly days of chivalry. There is great need of the infusion of a strong solution of iron into the blood of our race. Youth and health should rejoice in difficult tasks. They should feel the driving impulse of conscience to do the unpleasant things, and congregations should learn to give of their love and enthusiasm rather than wait to be lifted into a seventh heaven by the genius of someone who never comes. It is this new call to duty and service, whether they be pleasant or unpleasant, is the call that the world needs to-day. It is such a call that produces men who defend the world's liberties.

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THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

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solve, if this Hope be ours, "to purify ourselves, even as He is pure;" and well may we pray in the words of the Advent Collect, that God would give us grace to "cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light." So shall we "have confidence, and not be ashamed" when the King comes.

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Flattery is the politeness of contempt.—Bishop Spaulding.

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You think now that your burdens are heavy, that your trials are many, that your temptations are fierce; it may be every word true, but if God gives you a conscious hour in which to die, how profound will be the satisfaction and how sweet will be the joy that you bore all loyally and bravely for Christ's sake!