

surely return and assume his rightful authority.

2. With marvelous wisdom Jesus weaves into the story thus based on actual history his word of exhortation to his followers, showing them that what they have to set their minds upon now is not the glory of the kingdom, but its service, not the future reward, but the present duty. Yes, there are great honours and powers to be bestowed upon his faithful servants—"cities" and provinces to be governed, (figures which suggest to us wonderful spheres of blessed service in the world to come;) but first the capacity of his servants must be tested—one might be fit to be "over five cities" who could not wield "authority over ten." So the "pounds" are given them, to see how they will use them. And it would be quite consistent with the actual course of God's providence if (as before suggested) we combined the two parables, and said that he who makes his "pound" into ten will, even in this world, receive the "five talents," and he who makes his pound into five the "two talents," "each man according to his several ability;" entering at length, each in the measure of his capacity, into "the joy of his Lord."

What are our "pounds," and our "talents?" One might say that the "pound," being the same to each servant, is what we all have, (we Christians,) knowledge of the Gospel, membership in the Church, etc., and that the "talents," being varied in number, are the gifts and opportunities given us in God's providence. But for the purpose of our practical application it is scarcely needful to distinguish so closely. Rather let us lay stress on these three points:

1. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (Paul's question, 1 Cor. 4. 7.) Robert and George drop pennies into the missionary box. Robert received his penny from his mother on purpose to put it in; George earned his; which of them gave his own? Neither did! Who gave Robert his kind mother? Who gave George his health, strength, skill, time, to earn wages? As King David said, (1 Chron. 29. 14.) "All things come to Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee." Nay, even we ourselves, bodies, souls, spirits, belong to God—"not our own"—by his creation, (Psa. 100. 3,) and by redemption. 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.

2. What are you doing with your "pounds," your "talents?" Do you think, as the man with the one talent doubtless thought, "I can do nothing, I have so little!" Think of the Jewish maid, (2 Kings 5.) the widow of Zarephath, (1 Kings 17,) the widow of Jerusalem, (Mark 12,) the lad with the loaves, (John 6.) Do you say, like the slothful

servant in both parables, "God is so strict and hard—I never can please him—it's no use trying," (see Job 21. 15; Mal. 1. 13,)—and so do nothing! What a mistake! He is so generous!

3. How will you meet the King when he returns? All must render up an account to him. An account of what? Of everything; if you entrust a friend with ten dollars, will you be satisfied if he accounts for nine dollars and ninety-nine cents? Will you deserve a reward? Paul knew he did not, (1 Cor. 15. 10; 1 Tim. 1. 15; comp. Luke 17. 10;) and yet he expected one (2 Tim. 4. 8)—why? Because Christ is a generous master, and gives more than either we desire or deserve!

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Notice the difference between the Parable of the Pounds and that of the talents, (Matt. 25. 14-30:) (1) In time of delivery; (2) In characters; (3) In endowments; (4) In rewards; (5) In aims.... Draw from the class the pictures of the parable: (1) The king; (2) The faithful servants; (3) The unfaithful servant; (4) The enemies.... Note: (1) What Christ expects of his followers; (2) What Christ promises his followers; (3) What Christ's enemies must expect.... Teachings concerning Christ's kingdom. (See Additional Practical Lessons.)... Concerning the final account. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline.)... ILLUSTRATIONS. Opportunity is the manna spread on the ground which must be appropriated and prepared in order to become of any benefit. ... The crop of wheat stored in the cellar decays; that spread out on the ground returns an hundred fold... Man who hid bank-notes in the earth, and afterwards found them decayed... Accountability—Daniel Webster's remark: "The sublimest thought of my life has been my personal responsibility to God."... Reward: the story of a noble who was imprisoned for entering into a conspiracy with a prince to obtain a throne; afterward, when the prince became king, his chains were weighed, and as much gold by weight was bestowed upon him.

References. FOSTER'S PROSE: 2072, 2152, 3650, 5579, 6960, 9276, 10780, 11894. POETICAL: 2830, 3893. FREEMAN: The "pound," 785; Valuables wrapped in clothes, 263.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

REVIEW. Recall the two special teachings. Pray often, and pray humbly, and draw from class the two parables on prayer.