

and own (but renewed) body, when the trumpet shall sound at the last day. The intervening time—be it long or short—being passed as in slumber. No one knows when he passes from waking into sleep. No one knows when he passes from life into death. In both, the awakening will be without consciousness of the time passed. So the Scriptures tell us, so our Church teaches.

"I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write. From henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labours."

Let churchmen take warning from the errors of others who have no ancient and reliable guide, as we hear; that they fall not into such. Let them fully realize that the Church is Christ's lamp to their feet, that they stumble not. Let them earnestly strive to walk in light and not by the light of tapers of their own contriving.

Brockville, Sept. 17th, 1885.

J. R.

THE GOSPEL AS THE TOUCHSTONE OF HUMAN LAW.

SIR.—No man of sense and education, looks to the Bible as the source from which he is to draw the knowledge, science, and arts, which are to serve his practical purposes in this world, in order to qualify him for some trade or profession by which he is to earn his living.

But every Christian is convinced that there are many truths plainly stated in the Bible, especially in the N. T., which can be safely used as tests of the soundness of the discoveries claimed for modern science and philosophy.

Science and the arts have made astounding progress of late years, and almost seem to threaten to change for us the nature of the world we live in. And philosophy claims to have marched *pari passu* with science and art. This plausible claim of philosophy has doubtless shaken and overthrown the faith of numbers, or at least greatly influenced the minds of millions in the most enlightened countries.

Without at present saying anything as to the changes wrought in the condition of men, by the progress of science and the arts, I will speak here, only of the practical changes of sociology, which modern philosophy, when directed to that social branch of speculation, claims and urges to be now essential to the well being of mankind. And I will here limit my remarks to two points. There is a numerous class of men, many of them in some respects highly educated, who think that they have discovered that the greatest source of moral evil mankind is laboring under, is the use of *alcoholic stimulants*, and that one of the highest duties of the state, is to render this use impossible by prohibitory legislation.

There is another class of men, becoming, perhaps, in many civilized countries, yet more numerous than the prohibitionists of alcohol, these have found out that the proprietary rights, especially in landed property, is only a time honoured abuse, the usurpation, by a class, of the bounties of God to all mankind. Or, in case they do not believe in a God, a long endured perversion of the right of all men, to the benefit of the few.

Now, when these two fundamental propositions of the new social philosophy, are stated to a man, and his assent to their truth demanded if he be a believing Christian, before he plunges into a long and puzzling inquiry as to the nature of man, and his condition in this world, he will at once ask himself, is there nothing in God's Word that throws light on these questions? Without going back to the Old Testament, he will remember Christ himself has spoken on these points. And that when Christ teaches, it is with a perfect knowledge of all the present and future possibilities of the case in hand. He furnishes a rule, not for a particular state of society, or country, or age, but for the guidance of mankind in all countries, in all states of society, throughout all time.

The believing man, if familiar with the Gospel, will remember a certain parable, in which Christ foretells God's future dealings with the Jewish nation. In this parable, Christ likens God the Father to a certain man doing a succession of lawful acts. Read St. Matthew xxi. 33.

What does this reader of the Gospel and this believer in the Gospel, learn from this parable? From the first part he learns that a landholder may devote his acres, and his wealth to the cultivation of the vine, and the production of wine, and that he may do this on a large scale, for he let out his vineyard, not to one tenant, but to several. We have here the highest authority for saying that the production of alcoholic beverages, is an innocent, lawful industry, not unbefitting a Christian man.

In the latter part of the parable, we find grounds to justify a man in being, not only a large landholder and landlord over many tenants, but in being an absentee landlord collecting his rents, and managing his estate by his agents.

The parable further fully sustains the legal principle of inheritance, natural descent of property from parent to child.

It asserts to the binding character of leases. The high crime of these wicked husbandmen, was getting possession of land by taking a lease, and then appropriating it to themselves by repeated crimes, a series of murders.

The Christian student of this parable, if he be prone to political speculation, may be tempted to inquire further, "By what right does the state dictate to a proprietor how he shall, or shall not use his own, and what right the state has to dispossess him of it, for the benefit of other people?"

He who holds to the teachings of this short parable may well wonder how the temperance prohibitionists justify their doctrine that the production of alcoholic beverages, is a crime to be prohibited and punished by law. And, moreover, he at once sees that the Socialists, Communists, Anarchists, Nihilists, and those political theorists, who teach that property, especially landed property, held by individuals, is robbery of the landless multitude, in short, he sees that these classes have an utter contempt for moral obligations as taught by Christianity. He is led further to include among these classes, those Irish home rulers, so bent on getting rid of landlordism and the Saxon heretics in Ireland, that they conceive that in achieving this revolution, it is impossible for them to commit a crime.

This one short parable goes a long way to establish on solid foundations some of the most essential rights and institutions of social and civil life.

G. M.

HURON FINANCES.

SIR.—A further review of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund in Huron reveals the fact that if the appropriation of its lawful funds to the Mission Fund had not been discontinued after 1884, there would have been sufficient to meet the demand on the fund. The amount credited in 1885 to the W. and O. Fund is \$450 as paid by the Clergy, some being in arrears, whilst the balance is but \$97 57. The deficiency therefore would have been \$352 43. The official accounts confirm the statements. It should be remembered that the annual parochial collections for missionary work in the diocese are credited to the General Purposes Fund, so that the greater the charges made upon that fund from other sources, the less there is to place to the Mission Fund. The accounts for 1885 show \$5,287 73 arising from parochial and annual subscriptions as credited to G. P. F. account, whilst the amount transferred to the Mission Fund is \$3,757 80, being \$1,529 93 less than the amount collected. I am aware that this course has prevailed in the diocese heretofore, although not without objection, but it proves how the Mission Fund suffers from the practice: now that the Trust Funds are assessed for their management, a better method might be adopted. As to the present appropriation of the surplus of the Commutation Fund to the Mission Fund, it is deserving of notice, that the amount contributed therefrom the past year was \$5,553 56, whilst the amount contributed by the diocese from parochial and other collections amounted to \$8 488 49; in other words the clergy contributed to the Mission Fund, from a fund which was given for their benefit \$5,553 56 to carry on the missionary work of the diocese, whilst the diocese for the same purpose contributed but \$8 488 49. I do not understand that the Gospel of Jesus Christ requires those who serve at the altar, to provide the sacrifices offered thereon.

The superannuated clergy are paid entirely from out of the Commutation Fund, and therefore all, excepting the original commuted clergy, are in reality provided for by the clergy, and at the expense of the poorest paid amongst them. I do not say that it is improper to receive from this fund, but why should not the diocese contribute something for their "maintenance and support," as well as the clergy? They spend, and are spent for the Church. The truth is, that the appropriation of the interest arising from the Clergy Trust to the Mission Fund, has dried up the springs of lay liberality which formerly existed, and as a result their active and practical sympathy for the work of the Church, has decreased. Whilst the Church suffers financially, they suffer spiritually. Could anything else be expected, when a sacred Trust was taken from those to whom it lawfully belonged, and given to others? It was wrong, and honourable Christian laymen will refuse to partake of a benefit, to which they have no right. Christian men will not knowingly do wrong, for the purpose of neglecting the performance of an imperative duty. Ahab did not profit by taking possession of Naboth's vineyard.

But what is the practical outcome of the present financial system of the diocese as it bears upon the Commutation Fund? It is that the poorer paid clergy of the diocese receive no larger stipends. In 1873 the Mission Fund, although it received no aid from the

surplus of the Commutation Fund, rendered assistance so as to provide an income of \$800 per annum, whilst at the present time it only renders assistance to provide an income of \$700, unless a special grant is made. There are some seventy of the clergy on the Mission Fund, so that to each one a deficit exists of \$100 from this source. The amount applied the Mission Fund from the surplus Commutation is as stated \$5,553, sufficient to give to twenty-seven of \$200 each. From this it appears that twenty-seven poorly paid clergymen are \$300 per annum worse off than in 1873, which means that instead of receiving \$1,000 as a stipend, they receive but \$700. This is in face of the fact that since 1873 there has been a large development of material in the diocese. I think this sufficiently demonstrates the fact that the legislation of 1876 in dealing, as it did, with the disposition of the surplus of the Commutation Fund, was financially disastrous to the diocese, and consequently injurious to the well being and prosperity of the Church. As to the morality of the proceeding no truly Christian man will attempt to justify it.

FINANCE.

Notes on the Bible Lessons

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BIBLE LESSON.

"The Reconciled Brethren."—Genesis xlv. 1, 16.

We have seen the difficult methods which Joseph employed to test the sincerity of his brethren's repentance. How almost to the verge of harshness he treats them, until thoroughly humbled. Judah as their spokesman, eloquently and pathetically lays bare the inmost recesses of their hearts, and finally offers himself as a bondservant to procure his brother Benjamin's liberty.

It was impossible for Joseph any longer to doubt the affection of Judah and his brothers for Benjamin. He, therefore, does not leave them a moment longer than necessary in suspense. He himself has been almost overcome twice already by his brotherly affection, and now he cannot restrain himself from expressing it. He, therefore, orders all his attendants to withdraw; "Cause every man to go out, no stranger must intermeddle with the joy of the reconciliation."

(1). *Joseph's Avowal*, verse 3. Can we fancy how the simple words "I am Joseph," must have sounded? Well might his brethren at first be dumb, remembering how they had treated him. So in Acts ix. 6, Saul "trembling and astonished," hears the voice of Jesus. But Joseph called kindly, "Come near to me I pray you," you see before you the brother whom you hated, persecuted, and sold into bondage. So our Lord said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecuted," Acts ix. 5. Joseph then softens down their grief and shame for the injuries they had done him, by showing them how God's providence had overruled their actions and brought good out of evil, verse 5. He then explains to them that the famine should last five years longer, during all which time, there should be neither seed-time nor harvest, verse 6, and how God had used him while viceroy of Egypt, to be also the preserver of his father's house, compare Psalm cv. 16, 17. Thus they could see God's guiding hand, verse 8, in bringing him, whom they had sold into slavery, to be the chief councillor of Pharaoh, second only to the king himself. He then bids them verse 9, to lose no time in hastening to tell their father the wonderful news that his long lost son was alive, and to deliver the message he sends by them, verses 9-11, that he would take care of his father and all the family during the years of famine. Let us observe here how Joseph was an example of the duty inculcated in the fifth commandment, compare also 1 Tim. v. 4.

(2). *Mutual Salutations*, verses 14, 15. After Joseph had embraced his brother Benjamin, who had been about a year old when he was separated from his brethren, he in like manner embraced them all, and then after this seal of forgiveness, they felt indeed that he was their brother, and were able to converse familiarly with him; and how much they would have to tell and he to hear. See what a change Joseph's kindness wrought on his brothers, the old feelings of envy and jealousy might have flamed up anew, had he been unforgiving. It well exemplifies the truth of the old saying "It takes two to make a quarrel." May we be as ready to forgive those who have injured us as Joseph was. Compare Psalm cxxxiii.; Prov. xv. 17; Eph. iv. 32.