

Written for this Paper

THE AGE WE LIVE IN.

Men are very loath to believe that they will reap as they have sown. Spite of observation and possibly of experience, there are countless anticipations which are destined to fail of realization, because of the basis upon which they are reared. The Englishman who after enjoying his beer and being told that it was made of malt, sowed a little patch with that article, was disappointed in his expectation of more beer; just as the woman was with her first experience in raising fowls—she expected chickens from ducks' eggs because they were hatched by a hen.

There may be exaggeration here, but things equally foolish are expected in the every-day routine of life. Men sow speculation and extravagance and hope to earn the reputation of being smart and liberal. The observer can hardly make a mistake as to the result, but the chief actor on a stage like this is only misled by the red fire which he creates, rather than by the clear light of reason, which judges cause and effect. From a business standpoint men mislead themselves, spite of failure, assignments or bankruptcy around them. They indulge here and there, slightly of course, but appetite "grows by what it feeds upon," and habits are more easily fixed than overcome. Some give away their means from ostentation; others that they may be thought liberal and they sell to and trust the unworthy. Some sell for all they can get, never expecting to see their customer again. Others buy so suspiciously, exhibit so much fear of the dealer and confidence in themselves, that they provoke a man to take advantage against his will. Some sell without judgment, buy without discrimination, trade without cognizance of the outside market, and credit without thought of security or reputation; but each one of these writes his own epitaph, "He died of violation of law."

Men sow to ignorance and expect to reap intelligence. They neither provide mental food for themselves or their dependents. The movements of mankind, the discoveries of science, the progress by machinery, the enlargement of commerce, the questions of political economy, and the elements for an increased power in social life, are all unknown. They eat and live, they vegetate and die; the animal wants are all there is of man; "as their fathers did so do they." They remain narrow, circumscribed, living in a small shell, so to speak. Their conceptions of the outer world are meager and without attraction; its progress, grandeur, development, are without interest. Oblivious are they, save to their own little corner, with its cramped conditions and stifling air. They may perpetuate their kind; they are satisfied, and so will be their generations unless awakened by the moral earthquakes which Providence ordains from time to time.

Men ordain politics, they move by strategy, they give bribes and take them. In secret caucus they lay their plans, they manipulate the masses by fear, through misrepresentation. They libel their opponents and eulogize beyond bounds those whose affiliations

they secure. Nothing is sacred but their own schemes, nothing of value except it bend to their interest; and no one knows anything but themselves. Wherever there is a battle, they "scent it afar off;" to win it they cajole, lie, promise and betray. It is party above right and truth, and self above party, if that be in the way. It is place they want—and plunder, from the ward heeler and the candidate for municipal honors, to the scheming and trickery, the bribery and perjury which land the candidate in the gilded chambers of the Senate or higher, if that's the game. These call politics "a filthy pool." They would have no woman contaminated by it, nor would they admit the fair sex into the secret chambers thereof, lest they should look into the faces of husbands, sons and friends and knowing of their trickery and cunning, they should fall to withhold honor and deference in the sacred precincts of home and in the midst of an unsuspecting family. No woman suffrage, lest a man should be compelled to glorify his honesty and manhood by abjuring the methods which everywhere prevail and are acknowledged without a tinge of shame.

The leaves of a certain tree were "for the healing of the nations." The nations are sick, and quackery only is invoked to win the sufferer back to health. The "head is sick, the heart is faint," the pulse is fitful, feverish or languid, as if the crisis had arrived, and the end was not far off. Social turpitude flaunts itself; it takes possession of the courts; it fills the pages of the newspaper; the sexual relation by abuse has become "common and unclean;" its errors, sins and crimes are familiar to the once unsophisticated youth; divorces are ground out in the judicial mills with a nonchalance, frequency and detail which would have horrified our fathers and mothers; the old cry in the railroad stations of "Chicago! twenty minutes for divorce," has passed its facilities to the basins of the Rocky mountains; the bonds of society are loosened, its covenants are a thing of naught, progress (?) has made of marriage something "to be entered into at pleasure, and dissolved at leisure;" infidelity is common, liberty brooks no restraint, and passion knows no obstacle to its gratification; "free love" has become an undeniable fact in the domestic circle, and hosts of children are growing to manhood and womanhood, who, if untinctured by the same spirit would disown the father who begat and the mother who bore them! If Sodom was destroyed for its abominations, "shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

Turn to what should be grandest and most ennobling of all the features of our common life—its religion, which is supposed to be of divine origin—God-given to fulfill a divine purpose. Mark its diversities, its contrarieties; its hollowness, its subserviency, its fear of man. See its leaders, its professionals, all intent on dogma, party and sectarianism; boasting more of numbers than of lives, more of contributions than of converts, and of architectural glory and denominational wealth, than of spiritual growth and communion with the heavens. Forms, vest-

ments and genuflections are more than the spirit, the form more than the power, and the comfortable pew and its notable occupant, than the preaching of the Gospel on the highways and byways of mankind. Their sermons are surcharged with eloquence. Classic literature and historic anecdote serve to while away the Sabbath hours. All the graces of rhetoric, poetry, art, are used to touch the brain of satiated listeners. The heart is ignored, the life is untouched, the soul is unfed, and chaff is more often the pabulum provided for the hearer than that power which stirs the conscience, rebukes sin, commands restitution, or points out the duties and responsibilities of a fleeing life.

The world with all its strange and unwonted activities is yet asleep; it does not know "the day of its visitation." It clamors for wealth, for pleasure, for riotous living, for the "good things" of the earth. But the slumbering fires of a volcano are beneath its feet. The day of decision—of reckoning—is at the very door. Yet there are "eyes that see not, ears that hear not, and uncouth hearts that do not understand!"

While this is a picture, a true picture, we would not undervalue or ignore the good that is—the truth, honesty, virtue, righteousness that influences many souls. We cannot overlook the fact that there is much religious faith and power that will be acknowledged of God; many happy and loving homes which help to preserve our social life from utter putridity and rottenness; much patriotism, love of country and of man; much intelligence which is working to solve the problems which affect humanity; much of business where honesty and integrity bear sway. But with it all there is foreboding, unrest, dread of calamity and vengeance. Many realize that "the Lord" is holding a "controversy with the nations," and that "those who will not serve Him shall utterly perish and be wasted away."

No man wants to be "a prophet of evil"—yet the prophets have spoken. Few men would wantonly or wickedly pursue a course to their everlasting detriment; but they are under a delusion. Their learned men, teachers, clergy, have fostered unbelief; they have destroyed faith in God and in His Christ. They have rejected the message of life, hence they are "left to themselves," and have one and all, as the prophet said, "become as dumb dogs which cannot bark," as "salt which has lost its savor." If men will "sow to the flesh, of the flesh they will reap corruption, but if they sow to the Spirit they shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life."

OKLAHOMA MISSION CONFERENCE.

MARSHALL, Logan Co., O. T.,
April 22, 1895.

It is our pleasure to mail you this afternoon an account of our semi-annual conference of the Church held in Seven Sea Flat, Oklahoma branch of the I. T. mission.

Sunday morning, April 14th, Elders Ephraim Jeppson, Arthur N. Wallace, Edward M. McArthur, Isaac A. Jensen, Wm. D. Bowring, Wm. E. New-