

Written for this Paper.

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

The great features of the universe and of the earth are the same now as in all the ages past, suns and systems revolve in the infinite ether, as in the times of Johad Seth and Abraham; their sublime magnificence, their unchanging order, their noiseless movements, their infinite sweep, have arrested the attention of thinkers and seers, and even to the common man they have been objects of wonder, marvels of grandeur, and so fraught with suggestive influence by their stability and glory, as to compel supreme attention, and draw primitive man, at least, to the border line of willing adoration.

"When I consider the heavens, the workmanship of Thine hands, the sun and moon and stars which Thou hast created, what is man that Thou art minded of him, and the son of man that Thou visitest him?"

In closer communion with man because of his nearness and association therewith, is this (from an astronomical standpoint) little rolling orb of earth, with its astounding phenomenon, its wonderful configuration, its changing seasons, its marvellous beauty, its potent life; every day is a marvel, each night a poem, each season a miracle; its rolling seas, its perennial rivers, its hoary mountains, its fruitful valleys; the teeming life of its waters, the myriads of animal, bird and insect life; the cattle upon a thousand hills, the fruits of every zone, the flowers of all lands and hills and valleys; the glorious sunsets, the break of day, the spangled night—in all these phases and features of this our home, there is abundance to awaken curiosity, to compel observation, to charm and captivate the thought of its unnumbered millions, if they have but "eyes to see, ears to hear, or hearts to understand!"

But after all, these are but the adjuncts, the preparatory or suggestive elements from which the higher dignity and greater glory of its tenant, man, may be inferred; these were all created—made for him; for him this beauty, glory, magnificence and indwelling increase; testimony as to his nature, needs and destiny is written on every blade of grass, on every flower, and on that provision of fecundity possessed by earth, which, half spontaneously, still more by culture, ministers to life, health and reproduction, through fruits, grains and foods, whether for man or beast.

To man alone, the undisputed heir of this created and ever surprising wealth, is given the power of progress, the development of mind, the purification of soul, the innate prophecy of illimitable increase of mental and spiritual power; which is foretold in effort, in aspiration, in trial and triumph, in innocence and experience, in life and death; for these, however little appreciated or understood in the season thereof, are yet indisputably all working out that destiny so graphically expressed of olden time, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He (Jesus Christ) who is our head, shall appear, we shall be like Him and we shall see Him as He is!"

He was undoubtedly the grand

pattern, the revealed ideal, the personification of moral and spiritual excellence; "to Him gave all the Prophets witness, and in the fullness of time he became 'God manifest in the flesh';" in Him Divine purpose was fully exhibited, humanity was presented with its crown, its original dignity found expression, and all its weakness and waywardness its Savior and Redeemer; love for His fallen brethren, sympathy for their situation, and intense interest in their deliverance, marked, colored, glorified, every act of His unselfish and devoted life; every word was meant to rouse, to encourage, to lift up the necessitous among His brethren; it was only the hypocrite, the selfish, the rebellious, who had His chastisement. His soul was surcharged with His mission of mercy and sacrifice; His heart with affection, and His life with toil, that He might win man to a better, holier and grander life!

His submission to the will of the Father was perfect, His self-abnegation was perfect, His love for His brethren was perfect; "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," but He demonstrated the unfathomable character of His love, by doing this for His enemies; He it was who gave the answer to the first query propounded in the morning dawn of history, that which forms the caption of this article, first spoken of selfishness by the inspiration of evil, and repeated in every age, in all conditions of society, and by myriads of quakers in our enlightened age—"Am I my brother's keeper?"

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ," said one who "walked with Him in the regeneration," in the Christian dispensation. "If my life be of no value to my brethren, it is of no value to me," said the Prophet Joseph; "all of you that are willing to follow me, as far as I follow Christ," said the Prophet Brigham, "lift up your hands," and the universal response told that in the latter times, spite of tradition, training or rationality, the surging, struggling hearts of the Saints, beat in unison with the aspirations of their file leaders, and of their Master Jesus Christ.

That this is the conclusion, the hope and desire of many earnest, sincere souls in this dispensation, there can be no doubt, and in general terms many are willing (in their best words at least) to accept the thought of Divine Fatherhood, of universal or special Brotherhood, and they want to be counted as among the disciples of Christ, as seekers after His Spirit, as believers in His doctrine, as having faith in His promises and words; but the weaknesses of the flesh, the so-called pecuniary interests of life, the exactions of economy and the pressure of circumstances, forbid the practice of this theory of human life, action and interest in another, even if of "the household of faith!"

"Am I my brother's keeper?" is the question asked by men of wealth, by men of position, by men of influence, small or great; their acts give the lie to their profession, their interests compel sacrifice from others, thus selfishness prompts to exaction, to crowding down labor, to overlooking faithful service, to non-consideration of a thousand things which are involved in

not specified in that code of moral right and presumed brotherhood, which enter into both foundation and superstructure of that society building called Zion, or "the Kingdom of God on the earth."

"Human nature is human nature," said an old writer; "cousiness is natural," said a prominent man in Utah; the first may be true of the unregenerate, it should not be true of those who, having been "baptized into the likeness of His death," have risen to professed "newness of life," because they "have put on Christ." The latter may be the excuse for every species of tyranny, of over-reaching, of submission to the so-called exigencies of trade, competition or circumstances, as selfish interest may suggest.

It must needs be that there should exist a more thorough transfusion of charity into the hearts of believers; a more earnest consideration of the necessities of their co-religionists, for "the mind of Christ" asks not "Am I my brother's keeper?" It realizes knows that each one is "his brother's keeper;" that by example, influence, acts, sympathies, men affect each other; thoughts are created, inferences are drawn, interests are affected, controlled, jeopardized, overthrown by force of interested will or exercise of arbitrary power or authority for which there will have to be a strict account, for higher authority once said, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

It is this spirit of greed, injustice, selfishness, competition, which is demoralizing all the nations; it is destroying confidence, sappling the foundations of society, making every man an Ishmaelite, and will yet drench the world in blood; now, as in the olden times, some men's "gold and silver is cackered, and the rust thereof is a witness against them, and it shall eat their flesh as it were fire. The hire of the laborer is kept back by fraud, and the cries of the laborer have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."

Not that wealth should be decried or its possessors outlawed or punished; it is the misuse, the abuse of blessing which brings the curse; men who defy competition and array man against his brother have "the mark of the beast in their foreheads," though they may not know it, and rulers who overlook the teeming creators of wealth in their sycophantic adulation of the millionaire will realize that faith alone will not give salvation, "when a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food," and the supercilious man of means says, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding he gives them not those things which are useful, what doth it profit?"

Nevertheless, there is a vast amount of philanthropy in the world, thousands of good warm hearts, souls full of sympathy and commiseration of necessity; religious bodies are working, statesmen are planning; the spirit of the age drifts into the way of relief, and by inspiration will prevent instead of cure. Although the first query of selfishness may be the last to be answered of Christianly undefiled, it