

taken has been forced upon the Southern Pacific, which finds it rather expensive business to have to run trains specially for gangs of vagrants without hope of monetary reward. The tramps travel in organized companies from El Paso, Texas, to Portland, Oregon, and back again. Each company has a captain, and the number in a gang is so large that a sort of military discipline as against the railroad is successfully enforced. Trainmen are powerless to put the tramps off except in a few instances, and in these loss of property has been inflicted on the railway by spite work.

The tramps that crowded east in such great numbers a few weeks ago are now heading for California, where the mild winter season and the prospective Midwinter Fair form a big attraction for the loafers. This shifting back and forth gives a big passenger business to the railway, but as there is no cash in it for tickets the Southern Pacific intend to stop it. One thing is sure, and that is if the railway men themselves are not powerful enough to check the imposition, a call made by them for official protection cannot go unheeded. The people cannot afford to have railway trains or any department of public carrying service at the mercy of robber vagrants, nor can the law officers be justified in permitting the property rights of corporations any more than individuals to be illegally assailed.

SUPREME VIRTUES.

At a time when all Christendom is preparing for the celebration of the advent to the earth of the Greatest among men, the devout mind naturally feels the propriety of meditating upon the truths He announced, and to which a most wonderful civilization owes its progress and achievements, if not existence. These truths relate to the duties we owe both to our Creator and to ourselves, but more especially to our fellowmen.

To refer only to this last point, how perfect are the principles He expounded to His followers! These are expected to be just in all their dealings with others. But justice demands that nothing be done the result of which is oppression or the curtailing of their liberty, unless forfeited by criminal acts. Justice respects the property of others, and, in the true, Christian conception of it, guards even against the secret desire to possess what belongs to others. Under this principle theft and fraud are impossible. It, further, respects the character of others, admires their virtues just as much as it censures their vices, and generates gratitude for benevolence received. Injustice is one characteristic of some who reject Christ.

Absolute truthfulness is another virtue inculcated by Him, who is emphatically the truth. Veracity is necessary to confidence, and without confidence no friendly intercourse between men and men is possible. In the teachings of the great Nazarene one virtue is more emphasized than others, it is this. His whole life is an admonition to His followers to be true—not only to speak the truth, but to live it. And this is supposed to be

carried out in its utmost consequences in every position, in every transaction. Commencing with being true to God, a genuine disciple of Christ will be true to his country, to his family, to his friends, to those with whom he associates, be it in political organizations or churches; in the store of the merchant or on the field of the farmer. Truth everywhere is the standard of the Christianity Christ taught.

So far probably even natural morality would go. All admire, at least professedly, justice and truth. Heathen philosophers have come pretty near the Christian idea of these virtues and have taught them to their followers. But our great Teacher went further. He urged the cultivation of peace and good-will towards all, irrespective of desert. Every precept of the Law and every teaching by the Prophets is summed up in the principle of universal love, a disposition of the heart that enables man to avoid envy and pride and to be concerned about the happiness of others, as a means of obtaining happiness, as well as to "hear all things, believe all things, endure all things."

It is the disregard of this last virtue that is responsible for all the misery and all the mischief under which Christendom still suffers. Men have been striving to build themselves up on the foundation of one part only of the principles laid down by Christ. The greatest and noblest of them all has been neglected, except by a few individuals, who have either been ostracised as maniacs or even suffered martyrdom. Let the world understand and follow the principle of universal love as announced by Christ, and the kingdom of heaven will dwell on earth.

This is the condition to be called into existence by the second advent of the Son of God. Looking at what has been accomplished in the world under the influence of Christianity only partly understood and imperfectly carried out, we may judge somewhat of what will take place, when all are taught by the Lord and the power to follow the teachings corresponds to the knowledge obtained. That is the period of the earth's history that is coming and which Christ's followers expect.

THE CZAR A CHURCH BUILDER.

The Russian emperor seems to be fond of building churches. One of the most magnificent edifices of the kind, a veritable fairy palace, has been erected on Mount Olivet, near Jerusalem, by the present emperor and his brother, in memory of their mother. And now it appears that the czar has erected another costly edifice at Borki, Russia, upon which millions of roubles have been expended. It is erected as an expression of gratitude to the Almighty for the emperor's miraculous escape from death in a railway disaster near the village in 1888. It would seem that the sovereign head of the Russian empire, both state and church, has religious sentiment enough to honor and respect a higher Ruler and pay his homage to Him.

The Idaho *Daily Statesman*, in com-

menting upon this church building, raises the question whether man can please the Almighty by the erection of costly "temples," and comes to a negative conclusion. The Builder of the universe cannot find pleasure, that paper thinks, in the poor efforts of mortals. It would be better, it is urged, to distribute the millions among the poor.

Without intending any disrespect to our Idaho cotemporary, we may be allowed to allude to the similarity between this argument and that of one of the ancient Twelve, when a certain woman anointed the Master, as the custom of the time and country in certain cases required. "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?" As a penny was a fair day's wages, the question seemed pertinent; but the Master at once defended the act of seeming waste, because the motive was pure. And this gives the true answer to questions of that kind. The church built by the czar may be insignificant in every particular in His eyes at whose command worlds came into existence; yet, inasmuch as he felt gratitude to God and wished to express this feeling, his work is to that extent acceptable and will not be unrewarded.

If the Almighty could take no pleasure in the work of His children on the earth, why did He command Moses to build the Tabernacle and David and Solomon a Temple, and why did His glory appear in their buildings? The Son of God called the Temple His Father's house, and delighted to be within its sacred precincts. That Temple had then been under construction nearly forty years and must have cost immense sums. But He never intimated that the money ought to have been distributed among the poor, although in His every act and word He proved Himself to be the friend of the poor. The fact of the matter is that those who are liberal in regard to such things are also generally open-hearted towards those who are in need. Where God is not honored, the poor are also neglected.

The *Statesman* mixes the two ideas of Temples and churches as if they were identical. But they are not. A church is simply a place of worship. A Temple of God is a building erected for the purpose of bringing the work of salvation within the reach of the departed generations of the human race. To build Temples is one of the duties of the Church of Christ in these latter days. And that the Almighty is well pleased with the work so far done is evidenced in many ways. The Saints do not regret the labor or the money they have expended on their Temples. On the contrary, when God commands, they are willing to give again, and to erect even more magnificent buildings to His holy name.

A REAL REVELATION.

In the course of an article favoring the admission of the territories to statehood, the Cleveland *Plaindealer* of December 18, after indulging in a little rather creditable wit—for Ohio—concerning Arizona and New Mexico, gets along to argument serious and