

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

Hartland P. O.,
Paulpietersburg,
Natal, Aug. 22, 1919.

Dear Highway:

Last Wednesday's class was rather interesting and, I trust, profitable. Our subject was the 5th Commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother, etc.," which is the only one among the ten having a promised reward, "That thy days may be long"

We noticed the sons of Eli slain young and their father punished for the violation of this irrevocable law. God made them an example for all ages, saying, "There shall not be an old man in thine house for ever."

Abraham was taken into the Divine confidence because God saw that he would "command his children and his household after him and they shall keep the way of the Lord."

It seems a common belief that all the negro races are descended from Noah's son, Ham. "A servant of Servants," was his curse because of his disrespect to his father. Not only are the black races more servile today than others but even the filial respect seems to be lacking.

An overgrown, half-witted Zulu boy on a farm adjoining ours beat his grandfather over the head, trying to kill him, according to an old custom. There is a place near the site of the old "Royal Kraal" of Tshaka, called "Bulala Ixeku," ("kill the old man"), where the old men were taken to die. They were told by the young men, "You have had your day of eating and drinking and now it is our turn." Then the clubs were used. The South Sea Islanders and some African tribes not only killed but ate their old parents.

Disobedience to parents is given as one of the signs which will denote the perilous times of the last days.

Even Christ taught us by example this all important lesson of obedience by being "subject" to his parents.

Solomon, the wisest man, says, "He that spareth the rod hateth his son, but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." Fortunately there are other ways of correction. A system of rewards is sometimes used. I gave the Wednesday class several instances from my experience, which they seemed to appreciate. The first was a never-to-be-forgotten task of extracting a bad tooth or Paul. The child resisted, making it exceeding unpleasant for me. Prayer for wisdom, and the conviction that there must be a more excellent way, led to a solution of the problem. A promise of 25 cents for every whole tooth and those with partially absorbed roots at the same rates, worked like magic. From then on all my children have always urged me to extract their teeth. They begin asking about two years before the time to remove their first teeth.

Some children do not quarrel, but ours are not that kind. While living at Lower Brighton came to be a great trial. Each child wanted his or her own way. A happy thought occurred to me and I brought home some candy, raisins, but mostly nuts. Rules were made that these nuts were to be had only at meal times and

were for the children who had not quarrelled for half a day.

It was wonderful how wars ceased. One child would remind the other when on the brink of open hostilities and thus they both would earn what came to be called the "rowing nuts."

One more instance: Failure to come when called was the one offence calling invariably for the switch. Faith and Paul always played together and would wander far away, so I often needed to send for them or use my special call, a peculiar and loud whistle. The promptness of their response has many times caused the natives to laugh. One would see two straw hats coming through the grass or suddenly emerging from some donga; and they always come on the run.

Before now I have visited homes where one or two children, because they had not been taught to obey, made it impossible for their parents to enjoy their meals or conversation with friends for the noise and nagging of the spoiled little ones. One can hardly say, "of such is the Kingdom of heaven." And right here, one sees the greatest reason for the fifth commandment. Parents who neglect on this line, rob their children of a common birth right and head them for hell. This is harsh language, but why do so many young people of Christian parents walk in the broad way that leads to death. It is because the narrow way of obedience to God and parents is irksome to them. In other words they have not been brought up "in the way they should go." Of course there probably are exceptions, and much more might profitably be said, but I am getting away from our Wednesday class.

We have a lesson and testimonies. Aloni gave us his method. "I put some sugar in a dish under my bed, and by and by my children will say, 'Papa, do you know you have not eaten all your sugar?' And sugar with them is a very rare treat. 'O yes, I remember my sugar. I will eat it when I get ready.'" This query and answer is repeated several times. "But," says Aloni, "Some day, perhaps in three weeks, my sugar is missing; then I beat my children."

Others in the class gave their experiences, telling of their childhood days when they were obedient or otherwise, until our time was finished and class dismissed.

Let us, as parents, lacking wisdom on this line, ask of God and teach our children obedience, remembering that Jesus learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

Yours in Him,

H. C. SANDERS.

It is the fashion now days to brand people with the epithet, pessimist, if they refuse to be satisfied with the way the religious effort and work of the times is being carried on. If they sigh for the days of the old-fashioned religion, they are called pessimists. Well, if the worldly, self-pampering, giddy, unsatisfied religion of today which is so general, is the right kind, we plead guilty, for we do not believe in it, and if it be optimistic to be satisfied with it we do not want to be called optimists. What a much abused word is optimism!—Christian Witness.

THE OLD TIME PULPIT.

A Blow at the Root, by Rev. John Wesley.

Luke 22:48—"Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?"

1. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," shall see the face of God in glory. Nothing under heaven can be more sure than this: "for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. And though heaven and earth pass away, yet His word shall not pass away." As well therefore might God fall from heaven, as His word fall to the ground. No, it cannot be; none shall live with God, but he that now lives to God; none shall enjoy the glory of God in heaven, but he that bears the image of God on earth; none that is not saved from sin here can be saved from hell hereafter; none can see the kingdom of God above, unless the kingdom of God be in him below. Whosoever will reign with Christ in heaven, must have Christ reigning in him on earth. He must have "that mind in him which was in Christ," enabling him "to walk as Christ also walked."

2. And yet as sure as this is, and as clearly as it is taught in every part of the Holy Scripture, there is scarce one among all truths of God, which is less received by men. It was indeed acknowledged in some degree, even among the wiser heathens. Some among them allowed that nothing would please God, but the sancti recessus mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto; "a virtuous, holy mind, and an heart deep-dyed with generous honesty." But though they could not deny, yet how easily and effectually did they evade this! They fancied something else would do as well; that some rites or ceremonies, some external forms or glorious actions, would supply the place of inward holiness. So the famous Roman entitles to future happiness, not only the good and virtuous, but all. So, to fight for their country, to write good verses, or to invent useful arts, was abundantly sufficient, in the judgment of the wisest heathens, to give men a place in heaven!

3. But this would not pass with modern Romans. They despised such gross imaginations. But though they did not allow these, they found another way to get to heaven without holiness. In the room of them they substituted penances, pilgrimages, praying to saints and angels; and, above all these, masses for the dead, absolution by a priest, and extreme unction. And these satisfy the Romanists full as well as illustrations did the heathens. Thousands of them make no manner of doubt, but, by a diligent use of these, without any holiness at all, they shall see the Lord in glory.

4. However, Protestants will not be satisfied thus; they know this hope is no better than a spider's web. They are convinced that whoever leans on this, leans on the staff of a broken reed. What then can they do? How shall they hope to see God, without holiness? Why, by doing no harm, doing good, going to church and sacrament. And many thousands sit down content with this, believing that they are on the high road to heaven.

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