

THE LAST FORTY

No, I don't believe in foreign missions. I'm a home mission man. I think it's foolishness to go spending money on other people when America is not all right. Let us convert America. Let us make our own country pure before turning to others." This from Farmer Hopkins. And he spoke with vehemence, too, for he had often made this same speech, and with each succeeding recital had been more and more convinced of its correctness.

His neighbor, Carter, was a full minute in giving his answer to this outburst of reason, but finally plied the following question, "Thomas, how many acres have you in your farm; I mean your home farm?"

"One hundred and thirty," answered Brother Hapkins. "I guess you're a little anxious to change the subject, aren't you, Henry?" he added with a chuckle.

"Just wait a minute, Thomas, One hundred and thirty acres. Now, if I remember aright you have two forties, two twenties, and the ten acres around the house."

"Yes, that's right," added Brother Hopkins,

"Now, Thomas," he continued, "allow me a suggestion as to how you should farm your land. I think you have been entirely wrong in your method. The other day I noticed you plodding home with your horses, hauling back the plows from the farthest forty behind the woods. Now, Thomas, you do foolishly in that."

"But! Carter—"

"Now wait, Thomas; I heard you planning to put a new fence around the next forty, and that you intended draining the low-lying tract in the northeast corner. Now my criticism is this: You should not spend time and labor, and, above all else, money, on those outlying fields. You must remember you have the ten-acre tract around your home that has your house and out buildings, your cistern, spring, garden, flower beds and all things necessary for pleasure and comfort. You must admit your house is not all you desire. Your out-buildings need enlarging and repairing. The highest point of production has not been attained in your garden; your spring needs walling up; your lawn needs resowing and your drive fresh gravel. Thomas, it is wrong to go down to that last forty, until you have made the home ten acres spick and span and perfect. Now, Thomas, do you think all this is right, in the face of the policy you have just declared?"

"I see what you are driving at," answered Farmer Hopkins, and added, "I never thought of it in that way."

"Of course, you see," hastily pursued his neighbor, not heeding the practical admission, "You seem to forget that the Lord has seen fit to fence this world off into different fields. Now there is the South America field, the Asiatic field, the African field, the South American field, the Australian field, and then—here is the home place. God is a wise overseer, and expects His servants to be wise husbandmen. He believes in farming His entire farm and so decreed that His disciples should go to the other side of the farthest field—there to prepare the soil, sow the seed, and reap the harvest. It would be just as foolish for Him to keep His laborers constantly plowing and pruning at home, to the neglect of His other needy fields, as it would for you, Thomas, to pursue the same policy

on your ten-acre home plot. And Thomas, no one knows that better than yourself."

"I see," said Hopkins, "I see; and I guess you're right. I can't go myself; I've got to take care of my farm here. But I'm willing to send a hand out to do a little plowing up in the corner of the Lord's last forty."—Sel.

RIPPLES

By Dorothy A. Wheeler

It was in the early morning
When I heard a happy whistle,
And I looked and saw a little boy
With pumpkin-colored hair.
His small lips were puckered tightly
As he rode his two-wheeled cycle,
And he sent a joyous melody
Upon the crispy air.

Soon my busy hands were twirling,
Wiping spoons and bowls and glasses,
And from out the very depth of me
There sprang a little song.
Then I stopped; and it came to me
That the song I had been singing
Was the tune the small boy whistled
As he lightly sped along.

Lord, I pray that in the morning,
Like my happy little songster,
I may toss glad tunes like pebbles
In the pool of newborn day.
May the ripple rings reach outward,
Touching soul on soul with gladness,
Starting song on song a-singing
In the hearts along my way.

TREASURE

Youth has ambition and fancy. One reaches toward a goal but perhaps never reaches it. Or, having acquired the thing or the end he had in mind, he finds that his very soul has been shriveled in the getting, or he finds that the thing does not satisfy. Then he may see that the good is for the three score years and ten, and perhaps one is almost there now. How futile it all seems!

However, one need not be disappointed and disillusioned in the sixties and seventies. If he has sought spiritual values he has found them. Having built for the spiritual welfare of others he has built for their best welfare. He has brought to them something that will last.

If for himself he has obtained the pearl of great price he will find that treasure undimmed by the passing years.

On the deathbed the sinner sees receding all the good for which he labored, and only emptiness and despair ahead.

On the deathbed the saint remembers the battles fought and victories won. He rejoices in the good his life has passed on to others. The treasure he has purchased has currency in heaven. It is to be his forever.

If one gets along without God in youth or middle life still death will come before old age or with it.

Who wants old age without God? Who wants, at any age, death without God?

You cannot understand a sin, or see it clearly until you have begun to fight it. As long as it possesses you, it will never show itself to your eyes. It is only when it is grappled with that it manifests its ferocity and its ugliness.—Selected.

GOD'S WAY IS THE ONLY WAY

Lady Astor, member of the British Parliament, surprised her colleagues recently by declaring:

"Solomon, the wisest of all rulers, prayed for an understanding heart. Today we who have faith in God have an even greater responsibility than Solomon. We see countries torn by revolution and persecution, religious liberty and faith in God challenged and declining, whereas we have religious freedom, peace and comparative prosperity. These conditions have come through the spiritual vision and courage of our ancestors.

"When I am asked what we can do now I say—surely pray for an even greater understanding of God's laws, and obey our Lord's commands in having one God and loving our neighbor as ourselves.

"This can be done only by the spiritually-minded. It seems to me that we have been swayed too much by modern materialism, which says, 'Get your economics right and the kingdom of God will be here.' That wasn't Jesus' message. Wealth doesn't mean happiness, any more than poverty means piety. The road is much harder than that, and economics will not make it into a highway. The kingdom of God is within us, and we must seek that first. When we do, the way, though narrow, is a way, and my advice to those who are bogged is to try it."

So the great of earth are beginning to realize their only help cometh from above.—Christian Action.

THE BLUMER INVESTIGATION

Dr. Herbert Blumer, of the University of Chicago, aided by Philip M. Hauser, has recently completed an investigation of the effect of the movies upon character. Among their interesting discoveries, which are voluminously recounted, they report the following:

Fifty-five per cent of the boys being dealt with because of truancy or other misbehaviour indicated "that pictures dealing with gangsters and gunplays stirred in them desires for 'wanting to make a lot of money.'"

Twenty-five per cent of a sampling of 110 boys in a penal institution gave the movie as the cause.

In pictures investigated thirty-two separate and important items of crime technique were given.

Just remember that the movie is not only the greatest promoter of crime but ever the friend of liquor, the cigarette, and loose morals, and ever the enemy of the home, the church, and the Sabbath.—Sel.

PURPOSE OF FRIENDSHIP

Just as the tree extends its roots to nourish its growth and then in return spreads forth its protecting shade over the soil from which it derives its sustenance, so should we, as the years roll on, broaden and expand our contacts with our fellow men in order that our lives, being made richer by these new relationships, may in turn be of greater service to mankind.

That is the purpose of friendship; that is the essence of life. Let us make it a point to gain one new friend, one new human contact with life, so that each of us, my friend and I, through this interchange of viewpoint, may be bigger, stronger, more valuable to the age in which we live.—Anon.