

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

VOL. XXXVIII.

MONCTON, N. B., NOVEMBER 30th, 1941

No. 62

HOW ENSOR ROBBED GOD

(A True Story)

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me." (Mal. 3:8, 9).

A minister of the gospel in the state of Maine found, on one of his charges, a man who professed conversion, but was extremely penurious. He wanted all the blessings that pertain to the gospel, but had never seemed to realize that the command, "Freely ye have received, freely give," was for him. The minister felt concern to help the man; but, whenever he said anything to him about contributing to the spread of the gospel at home or abroad, he was met by the excuse that, with a family to support, he had no money to give away.

One day as the minister was driving along, he saw the man, whom we will call Ensor, in his field and stopped to have a talk with him. He proposed to him that he should stake off a certain portion of that field, and cultivate it the best he could, and give the proceeds to the Lord. Ensor at last acceded to the proposition, and the minister, well pleased, went his way. The man planted the portion set apart with corn, and it grew wonderfully. When the minister saw him, he said he never saw anything like the way that corn grew; and the strangest part of it was, it was the poorest part of the field. The minister was aware of the latter fact before the man inadvertently made the disclosure.

"Well," said the minister, "the Lord has evidently blessed it, and you know you promised to give Him all the proceeds."

"Well, I don't know about that," said Ensor. "I didn't expect to raise more than one bushel of corn on it, and there will be five at least. I think I will give the bushel I expected to raise to the Lord's work, and the rest must go to supply the needs of my family. I have quite a family, you know."

The minister expostulated, but could get no satisfaction from the close-fisted farmer, and with a kindly warning he left him.

In a few weeks there came an untimely frost, and the minister, falling in with his parishioner, asked him if the frost damaged his crops at all.

"I should say it did," he replied, almost angrily. "Every particle of my corn has gone but that little corner piece I staked off."

"Oh, the Lord's lot is all right, is it?" asked the minister.

"I supposed you'd call it the Lord's lot, but I call it mine, and intend to use it, every ear of it. 'Circumstances alter cases,' and nobody with any sense would expect me to give any of it away, with such luck as I have had."

"My brother," said the good minister, "there is no such thing as luck in the world. 'Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' Take heed how you sow."

The man turned hastily away, and the minister went sorrowfully homeward, saying to himself,

"What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The minister went soon to another people. Months after, being in the neighborhood of his friend, Ensor, he stepped into a store to make a needed purchase and, inquiring of the proprietor, who was also the church clerk, of the welfare of the people, was met with the remark:

"I suppose you didn't know about Ensor's loss, did you?"

"No. What is it?" was the reply.

"Well, you know that fine horse of his, worth \$250 if it was worth a cent? Well, the other night that horse tried to jump out of the enclosure—never known to jump before—but this jump was too much for the poor creature, for he ran a stake into his side, and they had to kill him at once. Doctor said he'd die anyway. What luck that man has had the last year or two!"

The minister only said, "I'm very sorry for him"; but he thought a great deal more than he said.

One change after another took the minister to a different part of the state; but years after he was again in the vicinity of the scene of our story. As he sat on the piazza reading in the cool of the day, a man, shabby enough as to his clothing, with a shambling gait and an old pipe in his mouth, drew near and seated himself on the stone step at the end of the piazza, rather remote from the place where the minister was sitting. He had evidently been on a tramp and wanted to rest. The minister, after a minute or so, began to pace the piazza. Drawing near, he spoke to the man. Something in his appearance seemed strangely familiar; and as he continued to study the face, a conviction flashed upon him that it was his old friend, Ensor. To forestall any denial, he accosted him at once by his name. The man rather unwillingly responded, but knowing he was recognized did not try to conceal his identity.

"Where are you living now?" asked the minister.

"I'm not living anywhere in particular."

"Where is your wife?"

"She's dead."

"What has become of your farm?"

"I haven't got any. Everything is gone."

"Ensor," said the minister, "do you remember when you began to rob God by stealing the corn out of His cornfield?"

The man's jaw dropped as if he was struck with death, and his pipe was shattered into atoms on the stone step before him. He recovered himself partially, however, and turning upon the minister savagely, said:

"I'd like to know what that has to do with it."

"It has all to do with it, my brother," said the minister.

And he essayed to reach the hardened conscience of the man by words of kindly warning and entreaty. But Ensor, angry at the loss of his pipe, angry at the minister, angry at God, rose up and shuffled off. The minister learned that subsequent to his own departure for a different part of the state, as before mentioned, Ensor had turned his own son's family out of doors because

that son was not able to pay him a debt he owed.

Let the reader take the lesson home to his heart. We are only His stewards. Let us not rob God.—Elizabeth Larkin, in Bright Words.

"I SAT WHERE THEY SAT"

In the Christian Science Advocate appear the comments of Jenks the janitor. "Janitors' children don't eat crackers in church", is among the wise sayings.

In a more serious vein, Ezekiel wrote,

"Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days."

If one would "sit" with the janitor he will cooperate to keep the floor clean. If he would "sit" with the stranger he would make him feel at home in the church. If one would "sit" with one who is criticized and blamed he might be able to bring courage to a discouraged heart.

Then there are those who need the gospel. Some very dark souls sit not so far from our homes. Suppose we "sit" with them and try to show them the way of life. There is the heathen world. It is very hard to "sit" with those who have never heard the gospel message. Perhaps sitting there one day would cause us to see more clearly our duty to those who sit in darkness. And perhaps we would then pray for and give to missions—from the heart—as we have not done.—Free Methodist.

IN PRAISE OF PATIENCE

Patience serves readily in every good purpose, while impatience fits readily into every evil thing.

So long as the restlessness of sin is in the heart, there can be no true patience in the life.

"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus." (Rom. 15:5).

Obtain patience from God; practice the patience of God.

Christian patience comes from Christ; it is one of the things that accompany salvation.

Patience is a Christian grace; impatience is a Christian's disgrace.

"If you would lengthen patience, strengthen faith."

To know how to wait, and when, is one of the secrets of success.

The Christian's race must be run with patience and perseverance, if we would make sure of the reward at the end of the race.

Shakespeare says, "How poor are they that have not patience! What wound did ever heal but by degrees?"

"Ye have need of patience that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise, for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." (Heb. 10:36, 37).—Christian Witness.