

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

W. Edmund Smith

Spring and Easter both are here and it is beautiful that they come together. They both sing lovely songs of life from the dead. Resurrection, beauty and glory are seen in renewed life in field and valley not long since drab or snowbound. Nature and grace synchronize in Easter and Spring. Our God is the God of both. Only He could make grass to grow in the field or upon the top of the mountain. While every soul has in it the potential power of life, yet only God can give that divine touch which gives the soul kinship with God and makes it to live in a springtime atmosphere of life and progress. "And you hath Me made alive who were dead in trespasses and sin."

When Jesus died and was buried, the spiritual apprehension of the disciples seemed to go into reverse. It was neither wintertime nor springtime with them, although it seemed for a little time that winter's cold spirit of unbelief had settled upon them. Their despairing moan was heard in their lamentation. But we trusted it had been he who should have redeemed Israel. "They as much as said it is all over, we had better go fishing. In such words and attitudes can we not feel the cold winter drafts of unbelief and disappointment? Those who had left all to follow Jesus, perhaps amid the protests of loved ones, and the cynical prophesies of failure from those who could not wish them well, had that sickly feeling of the shame that would be theirs when they went back to their boats to become toilers on the sea.

That was the dark spell just before the dawn of that glorious day that would change their sorrow into joy, their faltering faith into unmistakable sight, their circumscribed vision of a nationalistic kingdom into the vision of a world-wide kingdom, "not of meat and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." They were "begotten again unto a lively, or living, or springtime hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

There was no possibility of their being deceived or mistaken. Jesus showed himself alive by many infallible proofs. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead (and by this we mean more than that his spirit was perpetuated, but that his body that had been nail-pierced, came forth from the tomb) is the best authenticated fact of all human history. The stone was rolled away and the grave was empty. The disciples found the open tomb, they saw the angel and heard his message and saw the grave clothes lie. That was good circumstantial evidence that Jesus had risen as he said. But best of all, He showed himself alive on ten different occasions. We cannot dwell on these separately, but for forty days he sojourned here below before taking his flight to glory, after having given them the commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. After Jesus had died, and was risen, and ascended to glory, that grave where he lay was never a rendezvous for the disciples, neither was Calvary's brow where he died. Pilgrimages to Jerusalem and the tomb of Jesus came after the church had lost the reality of spiritual emancipation and the glory of the indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost. Multitudes were sacrificed in their endeavor to capture the Holy City, because it contained the tomb where Jesus lay, by those who were absolute strangers to his life-giving power Jesus prophesied the de-

parting glory of Jerusalem when he said to the woman at the well, "Neither in Samaria nor at Jerusalem shall men worship the father. God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

But how may we be sure that Jesus was raised from the dead? If you have been raised from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, you have the witness in yourself. If you have received the Holy Ghost as complete sanctifier you have Christ crowned as Lord in your heart. In justification He is Saviour; in sanctification He is Saviour; in sanctification he is Lord. Our eyes are upon Jesus "at whose second coming to judge the world, the earth and the sea shall give up their dead and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in Him shall be changed and made like unto his own glorious body."

We are glad if the worldly church and professors give a special attention to spiritual things on special occasions. Special dinners, and special Easter apparel, special Easter programmes with so-called high-class music make entertainment for those who go in for will-worship and form, but only so far as the heart enters into the service of giving thanks, adoration and praise to the triune God for the salvation that delivers from sin and enables us to live holy lives every day of the year, does heaven take any notice, and angels cease their singing to listen to the songs of the redeemed children of God.

The blessed Holy Ghost makes us feel something of resurrection glory every time He gives us a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Then, if Lenten season means the living of a clean holy life, we have Lenten and Easter season all the year. Oh, you dear worldly professor who perhaps have eliminated chocolates, the movies, and the dance and the cards and other forms of worldliness just for a season, to soothe your consciences only to go back to all the worldly things as a dog returns to its vomit, what a mock you make of the sufferings, death and resurrection of Jesus! Not all the sanctimonious devotion you may offer can take the place of the old fashioned repentance for sin and a complete renunciation of the world, the flesh and the devil. Then will you feel in accord with saints and disciples of all ages who worship Jesus all the year round in truth and in the beauty of holiness.

THE TEMPORAL AND THE ETERNAL

By F. A. Dunlop

"The things which are seen are temporal."
"The things which are not seen are eternal."

Saint Paul registered this fact nineteen hundred years ago. I never thought of it, really, until today. Today, this truth dawned upon me with new meaning. I began looking at my surroundings. A desk, a floor-lamp, a sewing machine, a clock, a stove and some books. I arose and went outside. There, nearby homes were seen; automobiles, moving along the streets. I looked beyond these to nearby islands, and then beyond the islands to a portion of the Atlantic. Then my eyes lifted from these levels out to where the sky rested on the waters; and following the blue arch, I continued the upward look until my visions centered in the face of the sun.

I stood there with the knowledge that I was looking at things very old. The sun, the skyline, the earth beneath my feet. There were things that Time seemed unable to change—things that seemed not to coincide with Paul's statement. Here were the real things of my

knowledge, of my life; the feelable, the knowable things of all past and present history. And were they not real? Yes, very. But when I inquired of their future, they shocked me. I spoke to the things within my home of immortality, but they said, "It is not in us." I challenged the earth, the sea, the heavens, but they made no boast of immortality, they spoke of an end . . . sudden . . . final. They said, "You are looking at "seen" things, and "seen" things are temporal. With one voice, they said, "Don't build on us if you are building for the future."

Then said I, "Why bother about the future? All of these things will outlast you." But the word "you," held me up. I remembered Paul also said, "The things which are not seen, are eternal." Now, while I knew myself quite well, I had never seen myself. Hence, I belonged not to the "temporal," but to the "eternal." My relatives, my acquaintances, men everywhere—eternal. I realized that back of every face I see, there is a something, yea, a somebody, and that somebody is eternal.

What meaneth then all this feverish grasping for "seen" things? Is it possible that six thousand years of history has taught us nothing? Alas, how infantile we are! The thing that glitters and sparkles holds our eyes, ears and hearts. Is it not so, that if one generation would really GROW UP, the world would be revolutionized in every phase of its being? When statesmen, churchmen, schoolmen and tradesmen allow themselves to be influenced by the mighty fact of our text, wars will cease, worries will vanish and wrongs will be righted. One thing, and one thing only, will matter, viz., their relationship to God and heaven. A desk, a floor-lamp, a sewing machine, a clock, a stove, some books.—Oh, world, world, GROW UP!

(This message by Brother Dunlop was printed in "The Beacon," monthly publication of Bethany Bible College).

THE GREATEST OF THESE IS
EVANGELISM

Though I speak with the tongues of scholarship, and though I use approved methods of education, and fail to win my pupils to Christ, or to build them up in Christian character, I am become as the moan of the wind in a Syrian desert.

And though I have the best of teaching skill and understand all mysteries of religious knowledge, and lose not myself in the task of winning others to Christ, I become as a cloud of mist in an open sea.

And though I read all the Church literature, and attend preacher's conventions and institutes and summer schools, and yet am satisfied with less than winning to Christ and establishing my people in Christian character and service, it profiteth nothing.

The soul-winning preacher, the character-building preacher, suffereth long and is kind; he envieth not others who are free from the shepherding task; he vaunteth not himself, is not puffed up with intellectual pride.

Such a preacher doth not behave himself unseemly between Sundays, seeketh not his own comfort, is not easily provoked.

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things.

And now abideth knowledge, methods, evangelism, these three; but the greatest of these is evangelism.—A Paraphrase of I Corinthians 13, in Gospel Herald. — Joseph Clark.—Adapted.