THE CHRISTAIN VISITOR.

Tisitor Zulpit.

WHAT THE FARM LABORERS CAN DO AND WHAT THEY CANNOT DO.

C. H. SPUR-A NEW SERMON BY

"And he said. So is the kingdom of God. as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up. he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear. after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."— MARK 4: 26-29

and their great Master; and then we a shameful waste of propitious seatried to show how far human agency sons. Sluggards in the time of plough. was necessary in the work of the Gos- ing and sowing are sluggards indeed, pel. We also saw how thoroughly all for they not only waste the day, but holy results depend upon God, for throw away the year. If you watch neither he that soweth nor he that for souls, and use years of happy watereth is anything, but God who vantage, and moments of sacred the ripe ears. After a season God man may enter with holy industry, sower. and where no human work can possiin the kingdom of grace. If we shall brings forth a harvest without sowing. be taught of the Spirit of God we Weeds will grow without our help, shall find this Scripture to be full of but not so wheat and barley. The instruction upon the matter.

pearl out of the many excellent things out. which our Lord said which have been lost. John tells us that if a record of word is not like thistle-down, which His servant Mark.

Here is

A LESSON FOR SOWERS.

for the laborers upon the farm of God.

" SOW BESIDE ALL WATERS.

Imitate the sower, who was not so penny-wise that he would only cast the seed where, according to his judgement, all was good soil, but who, feeling that he had other work for his

judgement beside the selecting of the soil, threw the seed right and left as he went on his way, and denied not a handful even to thorny and rocky

soils. Still, wise sowers discover favorable opportunities for sowing, and gladly seize upon them. While we are seasons when it were casting pearls before swine to talk of holy Last Lord's-day morning our sub- things ; and there are other times

human heart is so depraved that it

It it remarkable that the parable will naturally bring forth evil in before us is peculiar to Mark. No abundance, and Satan is quite sure other evangelist has recorded it, but not to let it lie without a sowing of we do not think any the less of it on evil seed ; but if ever a man's soul is that account. We are glad that the to yield fruit unto God the seed of Holy Spirit led Mark to reserve this truth must be cast into it from with-

Servants of God, the seed of the all the works which Jesus did could is borne by every wind, nor like cer- Christ. They are eager to see the have been preserved they would have tain seeds wafted by their own para- blade, and delight to mark the ripenmade a library so large that scarce chutes here, there, and everywhere ing ear. They often hope that men the world itself could have contained but the wheat of the kingdom needs are believers, but they long to be sure all the books. Many of the things a human hand to sow it, and without of it; and when they judge that at that Jesus said floated about, no doubt such agency it will not enter into last the fruit of faith is put forth, for a time, and were gradually for- men's hearts, neither can it bring they begin to encourage, to congra-gotten, and we have to be thankful to forth fruit to the glory of God. Scat- tulate, and to comfort. They know the Spirit of God for perpetuating ter ye, scatter ye, then, the seed of that the young believer needs to be this choice similitude by the hand of the kingdom, for this is essential to housed in the barn of Christian fellowthe harvest. The spreading of the ship, that he may be saved from a Gospel is not a thing that ye may do thousand perils.

or may not do, according to your pleasure, but it is a duty urgently duced the convert to the communion needful, to be neglected at your peril. of the faithful. For our work, be-

trusion Certainly this is true of the rise rock on which the seed perishes. tard and cress will come to anything, and progress of the Word of God But it means, that as the earth under for he will not let it alone long enough

we are begotten again unto a lively ject was the laborers upon God's farm when if we were slothful it would be hope, how we are born of the Spirit the parable that spiritual life and I am solemnly convinced that some we cannot tell,

> This work of God having proceed-324 next?

> > WE CAN REAP

giveth the increase. We have much softening, you will not complain of the Holy Spirit uses His servants the same subject this morning, only the scanty space allowed for agency. again. As soon as the living seed has it goes a little deeper, and yet more Even should you never be called to produced first of all the blade of fully shows how far the laborer can water, or to reap, your office is wide thought, and afterward the green ear go, and how far he cannot go ; where enough if you fulfil the work of the of conviction, and then faith, which is as full corn in the ear, then the For little though it seem to teach Christian worker comes in for further bly intrude. Our subject on this oc- the simple truth of the Gospel, yet service, for he can reap. "When the casion will mainly be the measure it is essential. How will men hear fruit is brought forth, immediately he and limit of human instrumentality without a teacher? The farm never putteth in the sickle." This is not the reaping of the last great day, for that does not come within the scope of the parable, which evidently relates to a human sower and reaper The kind of reaping which the Sav iour here intends is that which He referred to when He said to His disciples, "Lift up now your eyes, for behold the fields are white already to the harvest."

Christian workers begin their har vest work by watching carefully to see when men evince signs of faith in

He does not rest till he has intro-

grow this a mystery; ripening is a fruit of itself." We must mind his little garden. This afternoon Masmystery; and these three mysteries what we are at in expounding this, ster Johnny will be turning over the are as fountains sealed against all in- for human hearts do not produce ground to see if the seed is growing. fruith of themselves: they are as hard There is no probability that his mus-

in the heart. It enters the souls itself the blessing of the dew and the rain for it to grow. So it is with hasty ve know not how. Naturally men is, but God's secret working upon it, workers; they must see the result of hate the word, but it enters and it made to take up and embrace the the Gospel directly, or else they will changes the heart, so that they come seed, so the heart of man is made leave off, and distrust the blessed to love it, but we know not how. ready to receive and enfold the Gos- word. Although the people may have Their whole nature is renewed, so pel of Jesus Christ within itself. taken the word into their minds and that instead of producing sin it This is a something congruous in the may be considering it, certain preachyields repentance, faith, and love, earth to the seed which is sown in it, ors are in such a hurry that they will Prevents Disease, but we know not how. How it is so that the seed is adopted and nour-allow no time for thought, no space are to work for God always, yet there that the Spirit of God deals with ished by the soil. Just so it is by the for counting the cost, no opportunity Prevents Disease, the mind of man, how He creates the heart of man when God makes it for men to consider their ways, and new heart and the right spirit, how honest and good ground. _____ turn to the Lord with full purpose of Prevents Disease, You, the sower, are thus taught by heart.

growth are of God, and come by the men are prevented from being savel seed and the soil far more than by by being told that they are saved aled in the growth of the seed, what you. So far as the truth is concern- ready, and by being puffed up with a ed, its intrinsic power is the same notion of perfection (when they are whoever preaches it. It is because not even broken in heart. Perhaps such and such a divine, whom God if such people had been taught to look has blessed, tells out the Gospel, that for something deeper they might not therefore it lives in men's hearts. have been satisfied with receiving seed Oh no; it is because of the truth itself on stony ground: but now they are and because of the hearts themselves content with that which comes of seed which receive the truth by the secret, sown on unbroken rocks ; they exhibit working of God's blessed Spirit. So a rapid development, and an equally much as this we may know, and is it rapid decline and fall. Let us believ-not enough for all practical purposes? ingly

Still there is a something which we cannot know; a secret into which we cannot pry. I repeat what I have said before, you cannot look into but let us look to see it advance after men's inward parts and see exactly the manner of the preacher firstly, sehow the truth takes hold upon the condly, thirdly, first the blade, then heart, or the heart takes hold upon the the ear, then the full corn in the ear. truth. Many have watched their own feelings till they have become ripen. Our work will lead up by blind with despondency, and others God's grace to real faith in those he have watched the feelings of the kath wrought upon by his word and young till they have done them rather Spirit, but we must not expect to see harm than good by their regorous it perfect at the first. How many superversion. In God's work there mistakes have been made here. Here is more room for faith than for sight, is a young person under impression, The heavenly seed grows secretly, and some good sound brother talks You must bury it out of sight, or there will be no harvest.

Thou knowest not the way of the ed brows. He goes into the corn-Spirit. His work is wrought in secret, and thou canst not tell whence field to see how the crops are prospering, and though it is early in the year, he laments that he cannot see an ear he cometh or whither he goeth. "Explain the new birth," says somebody. he laments that he cannot see an ear My answer is," Experience the new of corn; indeed he perceives nothing birth, and you shall know what it is." but mere grass. "I cannot see a trace There are secrets into which we can- of corn," says he. No brother, of not enter, for their light is too bright for mortal eyes to endure. O man, thou canst not become omniscient. dence of life, but must insist upon for mortal eyes to characteristic on the seeing everything at full growth at for thou art a creature, and not the once. If you had looked for the blade

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It is a parable for all who are concerned in the kingdom of God. will be of little value to those who are in the kingdom of darkness. they are not bidden to sow the good seed : " Unto the wicked God saith, what hast thou to.do to declare My statutes ?" But allwho are loval subjects to King Jesus, and are commissioned to scatter seed for the Royal Husbandman, will be glad to know how the kingdom advances, glad to know how the harvest is preparing for him whom they serve.

I. We shall, first, learn from our text

WHAT WE CAN DO

and what we cannot do. Let this stand as our first head. Notice, then that we can sow. Any man who has received the knowledge of the grace of God in his heart can teach others. I include under the term " man" all who know the Lord, be they male or female. We cannot all teach alike, for all have not the same gifts; to one is given one talent, and to another ten. Neither have we all the same opportunities, for one lives in obscurity and another has far-reaching in-Auence, something of sacred service is within the reach of everyone's capacity, whether it be the mother in the family, the nurse-girl with the infant, the boy in the school, the workman at the bench, or the nurse at the bedstead. Those with the smallest range of opportunities can, nevertheless, do something for Christ and his cause. The presious seed of the word of God is small as a grain of mustardseed, and may be carried by the feeblest hand where it shall multiply a hundred-fold.

You will need heavenly teaching that you may carefully select the wheat and keep it free from the darnel of error. We must even winnow out of it our own thoughts and opinions, for these may not be according for you do not know how it grows.

Ye can sow the seed, and the seed loved, is but half done when men are It must be sown.

the times are such that one sowing strengthen, to console, and succor in may not suffice. Sow again and again, for many are the foes of the wheat, What saith the Saviour? "Go ye and if ye repeat not your sowing ye therefore, and make disciples of all may never see a harvest. The seed the nations, baptizing them into the mustbe sown everywhere, too, for there are no choice corners of the world the hope that they will be self-productive. Ye may not leave the rich and intelligent under the notion that surely the Gospel will be found among them, for it is not so: the pride of life leads them away from God. You may not leave the poor and illiterate, and say, " Surely they will of themso: they will sink from degradation to received into the churches of your

with the Gospel. No tribe of man, no peculiar constitution of the human in season and out of season.

I have heard that Captain Cook, is one, and we labor for one Lord. the celebrated circumnavigator, was in one respect an admirable example to us. Wherever he landed, in whatever part of the earth it might be, he took with him a little packet of divers of English seeds, and he was often observed to scatter them in suitable places. He would leave the boat and wander up from the shore. said nothing to anybody, but quietly scattered English seeds wherever he went, so that he belted the world with the flowers and herbs of his native land. Imitate him wherever you go: sow spiritual seed in every place that your foot shall tread upon.

Let us now think of what yon can not do. You cannot, after the seed has left your hand, cause it to put forth life. I am sure

YOU CANNOT MAKE IT GROW,

to the mind of God. Men are not saved by our word, but by God's Word. We are bound to see that how." That which is beyond the and conviction, but to conversation working on toward the grand ultima-

made disciples and baptized. We This seed should be sow n often for have then to encourage, to instruct, to all times of difficulty and danger. name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching that you can afford to let alone, in them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.

The reaper is the man who gathers in the converts, and he fulfils an honorable and useful office. If I preach the Gospel to-day, and some shall be converted, I shall be the sower; but if going home to the respective towns in which you live, you who have selves feel their need of Christ." Not dropped in here as strangers, shall be degradation unless you uplift them own pastors, they will be reaping what I have sown. I envy not my brother minister his success in gather mind, may be neglected by us, but ing in the converts, but I rejoice with everywhere we must preach the word, him. The sower and the reaper may well rejoice together, for our work

II. Our second head is like unto the first, and consists of

WHAT WE CAN KNOW

and what we cannot know. We can know when we have sown the good seed of the word that it will grow; for God has promised that it shall do Not every grain in every place; for some will go to the bird, and some meinent we sow it. Sometimes, glory to be scorched by the sun; but as a be to God, we have but to deliver the general rule God's word shall not re- word, and straightway men are conturn unto Him void, it shall prosper verted; the reaper overtakes the sow-"full corn in the ear." God helping day, nor to-morrow, peradventure not

Word. We are bound to see that we know the Gospel, and teach the whole of it. To different me we must, with discretion' bring forward that part of the Word of God which will best bear upon their consciences for much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may depend upon the word being far season, and not a chances of much may far the germinates forth, with a swheat for the germinates forth, with as wheat forth weat forth with as wheat for the germinates forth, with as wheat forth weat forth weat had seen succeeded by the germinate forth weat had seen succeded by t

knowable of Mabas man

WHAT WE MAY EXPECT

III. Thirdly, our text tells us

if we work for God, and what we may not expect. According to this parable we may expect to see fruit. The husbandman casts his seed into the ground, and the seed springs and grows, and he may expect a harvest. I wish I could say a word to stir up the expectations of Christian workers; for I fear that many work without faith. If you have a garden or field, and you sow seed in it, you would be very greatly surprised and grieved if to work on, and they never reckon either see a result of my labor and be true servant of the great Master. We ought to expect results; if we had ex-pected more we should have seen more, but a lack of expectation has been a great cause of failure in God's. workers.

But we may not expect to see the seed, which we sow spring up the in the thing whereto He hath sent it. er, in such instances, but it is not al-

be a region not only unknown but un. you would have found it, and it would have encouraged you. tea M amoll a

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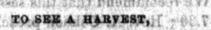
EXPECT TO SEE THE SEED GROW?

with that young brother and asks pro-

found questions. He shakes his ex-

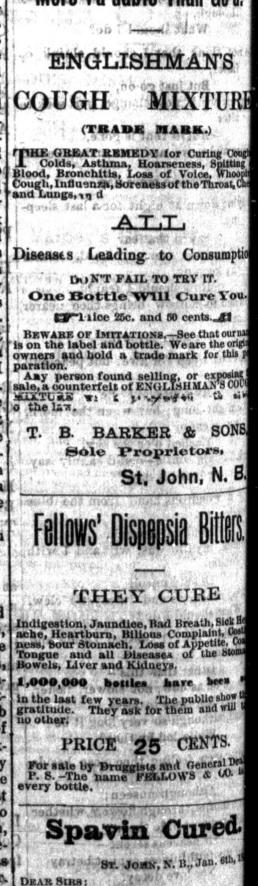
perienced head, and knits his furrow.

Do not despise the day of small COUGH things. Do not examine the newborn babe about Calvinism, in its diferent shades to see whether he is sound after your idea of soundness; ten to one he is a long way off sound, and you will only worry the dear heart by introducing difficult questions. Speak to him about his being a sinner, and Christ a Saviour, and you will in this way water him so that his grace in the ear will become full corn. It may be that there is not much that looks like wheat about him yet, but by-and by you shall say," Wheat ! ah, that it is, if I know wheat, This man is a it did not come up at all; but many true ear of cern, and gladly will I Christian people seem quite content place him among my Master's sheaves. to work on, and they never reckon If you crush the blades, where upon results so much as to look for it expectantly. This is a pitiful kind of working—pulling up empty buckets by the year together. Surely I must will the ears come from? If you cut off the green ears, where will the ripe ones be? Expect grace in your con-verts, but do not look to see glory in will the ears come from ? If you cut them just yet. It is enough if you glad, or else, failing to see it, I must see heaven begun: do not look to see it or be ready to break my heart, if I be a it complete in them here below. Expect, then, brethren-for you



may expect it-

but do not expect to see every seed springing up. "There," says one, " that is a discouraging word. There is an old worldly proverb which saith, Bowels, Liver and Kidneys. "Blessed are those who expect noth-ing for they shall never be disappoint-ed." I do not beliove in that proverb but I believe in a moderate form of it: "Blessed are those who do not ex-In the thing whereto He hath sent it. This we can know. And we can know that the seed when once it takes root will coatinue to grow; that it is not a dream or a picture that will dis-appear, but a thing of force and energy, which will advance from a grossy blade to corn in the ear, and under God's blessing will develope to actual salvation, and be as the "full coatine to grow". God helping of the server of the to converted to Christ; but not to-to actual salvation, and be as the high as truth permits, and no higher. I would have you climb to the top of the ladder, but if I encouraged you to go any higher you will soon be going down the other side, under the notion



regard to your favor of a few, friend of mind

