BEACON LIGHTS

VOL. II FEBRUARY — 1942 NUMBER 5

For Protestant Reformed Youth

"He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?"

—Psalm 147:16, 17.

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A Comparison

The Catechism and the Society.

Both have a place in the life of the Covenant youth of the Church, yet how different the one is from the other.

Catechism attendance is to a great extent compulsory, while the attendance of the young people's society is a matter of choice. Non-confessing members of the Church are obligated to attend the Catechism classes faithfully, even upon the insistance of the consistory. Even confessing members are urged to avail themselves of the opportunity to attend an adult Bible Class. While, on the other hand, it is left to the individual whether or not he cares to be a member of a certain society. Not as if Christian youth attends Catechism against its will, merely because it is an obligation, nor as if he feels justified in ignoring all other Church activities and refusing to join a society. Quite the contrary, the Christian young man or woman who enjoys studying the Word of God in the Catechism also freely enlists into the ranks of the society and makes the best member. But the distinction remains, the first is compulsory, the second is a matter of choice.

There is also this difference that the Catechism class is made up of a group of young people, either non-confessing or confessing members of the congregation, who are of approximately the same age and therefore study the same material together. The society is an organization made up of members who have joined by personal choice. They have their constitution, their by-laws, their officers, their time and place of meeting, and everything that is necessary for a well-organized group. The one is a class conducted by an instructor, the other is a society in which all take an active part.

The difference is even more marked than that. The instructor in the Catechism is appointed by the consistory to instruct the class in an official capacity. Most generally he is none other than the pastor who performs this work as a part of his pastoral labors. That makes the instruction an official ministry of the Word by the minister who is mandated of Christ to preach and to teach. While the society is led by the president who is chosen by the members and merely presides over the meeting. The evening is spent in discussions and in delivering a program, in both of which the members take part. In brief, the instruction in the Catechism is official ministry of the Word, while in the society

all labor together for the mutual edification of the members.

There is still one more difference that cannot escape us. And that is the difference of subject matter. The Catechist makes it his task to supply the spiritual and religious training of the Covenant youth. Sound doctrine is taught according to the Word of God, the errors of false doctrine are exposed and refuted, young men and women are prepared for their place in the Church. The society, too, busies itself with the Word of God, but rather takes various portions of Scripture into a general discussion and views all subjects and problems in the light of the Scriptures. The advantage of the former is that the instruction in the Catechism is given by one who is qualified and has especially prepared himself for his task. It lays a foundation upon which the youth of the Church can build. While the advantage of the latter is that every one has an opportunity to speak his mind on problems of a more practical nature which may be raised in the society. Especially in these times of international unrest many new and peculiar problems confront us on every hand. Preparedness, especially Christian preparedness is the order of the day, that we may boldly challenge any problem that confronts us and prepare a united front against any and every foe of darkness that may assail us.

We need our Catechism and our societies. Each has its own place and task. Especially the Catechism, which is often slighted in our discussions, is worthy of our consideration. But more about this the next time.

* * * * *

In Passing

We owe our readers a word of apology and explanation for the late appearance of our latest issue. No doubt, we have tried your patience and have disturbed the schedule of Bible discussion in many of our societies, especially those which took no vacation during the holiday season.

The only explanation we can offer for this exasperating delay is that some of the material for the last issue, through circumstances beyond our control, was late in reaching us, thereby holding up the whole issue from going to press. We can assure you that efforts are being put forth to have plenty of material on hand so that it will not happen again.

* * * * *

The Open Forum

You may have wondered about the conflict in our last issue in connection with the Open Forum. In

the editorial department you read that no material has as yet been received for this department and an appeal was made to act at once, while in another section of the magazine a letter from Manhattan appeared under this heading. The reason is quite obvious. This letter reached us after we had gone to press and rather than hold it for a later issue it was decided to place it at once.

We appreciate the fact that the ice is now broken. From far off Manhattan came our first letter. Who is next to speak his mind?

The subject brought up for discussion in this letter from Manhattan is worthy of our consideration for more reasons than one. It involves all of our young people's societies, particularly those which have not yet joined the Federation and which we are particularly eager to include in order to make the membership one hundred percent. It is also a subject that is coming up for discussion at our 1942 Convention, that bigger-and-better-than-ever Convention that is to be held next summer at the Roosevelt Park Church.

By the way, speaking of the 1942 Convention, reports have it that Roosevelt Park is already busily engaged in making preparations for it. A program made up of home talent was rendered a few weeks ago in order to raise funds for this worthwhile undertaking. Although I cannot verify the statement at this writing, I do believe that the program was very good and well attended. We may have some more news about this Convention in our next issue.

And that raises the question, have you nothing to say about the Next Convention or matters to be presented there? Is there no pertinent question that you are eager to have discussed in our Beacon Lights?

* * * * *

A New Department

Always eager to keep abreast with the trend of the times and to serve our readers to the best of their ability, the Federation Board has decided to devote a few pages of each issue of Beacon Lights to the boys serving with our armed forces.

Just as we like to keep contact with the young men in service, they also like to keep contact with us and with one another. This can best be done by publishing letters, either as a whole or in part, containing news items of general interest.

Turning the pages of this issue you will already find some of these letters which have been received. But if we are to continue to publish these letters we must have the full cooperation of you men who are in service. We realize that

there are certain difficulties involved. There is the strict censurship which does not allow anything to be published that might in any way serve the enemy, and which will doubtless become stricter as time goes on. And you may wonder whether there is anything of importance to write about. But it must not be forgotten that those things which seem quite commonplace and uninteresting to you do still interest us. Will you do your share to cooperate with us?

We also urge all societies that are corresponding with soldiers and sailors to forward to us any letters you may deem fit for publication.

Only if we all do our part can we make this department interesting and beneficial for all.

In Conclusion

A word of thanks goes to our managing editor, Homer Kuiper, who has found it necessary, temporarily at least, to discontinue his work on Beacon Lights. We appreciate the effort he has put forth and the time he has devoted toward our magazine during the first months of this season and can assure him that we have enjoyed the fruits of his labors. Only a managing editor realizes how much work is involved in putting out each issue of the paper.

Walter Hofman, who also serves as Federation President, has consented to carry on the work from this point. I am sure that both editors and readers are ready to give him our continued and complete cooperation.

* * * * * * * * * *

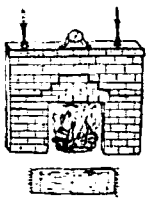
PEACE

Is this the Peace of God, this strange, sweet calm?
The weary day is at its zenith still,
Yet 'tis as if beside some cool, clear rill,
Through shadowy stillness rose an even psalm,
And all the noise of life were hushed away,
And gladness reigned with gently soothing sway.

It is not that I feel less weak, but Thou
Wilt be my strength: it is not that I see
Less sin, but more of pardoning love with Thee,
And all-sufficient grace. Enough! And now
All fluttering thought is stilled, I only rest,
And feel that Thou art near, and know that I am blest.

Fireside Chats. . . by Miss Alice Reitsma.

Ass't.-Sec'y-Treas. and Bus. Mgr.



A WEEK WITH MY DIARY*

Monday, January..... 1942:

It is not wise to always confide in others, and it is not good to practice talking to oneself, so I prefer to have my fireside chat with you, my faithful diary!

Today, while I was busy at my desk in the office, with papers and registration cards and code books, with telephone calls and personal interviews, with applications of people looking for work and with orders from employers who need extra help or new employees, I stopped for a moment and watched the people come and go. So many different kinds of people come into an Employment Office, especially a Government Employment Office. Some who come quite regularly know whom they should see and where they should go, but some wander aimlessly around or hesitatingly approach one of the clerks for information. Some are interested only in drawing unemployment insurance, some are skilled workers and are interested in working on defense and some are willing to take any kind of work they can get. Some seem to be in a terrible hurry and complain when asked to wait for a few minutes, while others seem to have all day and are even found napping when they are finally called by the interviewer. And yet: each one of all these people is an individual human being with his or her own life to live and work to do. Just as I was wondering how it was possible for each one of all these people to have a special assignment in life, the receptionist brought an old gentleman in to see me. Mr. Smith has been in often before and I usually save odd jobs for him, such as passing out handbills and cleaning out basements. He had not been in now for several days and he explained that he had been working for the landlady, scrubbing walls and cleaning woodwork to square off his back board and room rent and now the landlady threatened to throw him out into the street unless he could produce the money for board and room in advance. He cannot prove his birth date and so

*(Do not feel for a minute as if you are prying into something personal and private by reading the following. These pages were not torn from the diary I keep hidden in a drawer of my desk.)

can not collect Old Age Assistance, even though he looks all of sixty-five to me. He looks like a pretty old man and is really not physically fit to work very hard anymore. He has no living relative to help him and he told me, with a look of self-sympathy in his eyes, that he had not received a Christmas Card from anyone. I noticed that his white hair had grown at least two inches beneath the old shapeless cap which he wore on his head. "Well, Mr. Smith", I said in my most "professional" style, "we will just have to hope that something will turn up soon." But as I watched him scuffle out of the office, I thought, in my most "realistic" style, Yes, Mr. Smith, we will just have to hope for—hope? What had I said! Hope for what? No money to care for himself, no friends to protect or care for him ,old age and its troubles and disabilities hurrying to catch up with him. What had I said we should hope for? He was a picture of hopelessness!

Interviews continued, some people were sent out on jobs, others were turned away. Calls came in from some who had obtained work and from some who had been laid off. Change and confusion characterizes the economic world. Change and confusion—and hopelessness! Poor Mr. Smith! His case seemed the most hopeless of them all!

Tuesday, January...., 1942:

I wish all our Girl's Society meetings could be like the one we had tonight! The Bible discussion fairly bristled with life and even some of the girls who never contribute to the discussion otherwise, took part tonight and expressed their ideas, and the little argument we had, gave the lesson special spice. Not that we really disagreed. We all quoted texts to prove our points and, of course, the Bible does not argue with itself. But threshing out both sides of the question helped us to grasp and understand the deeper meaning of the parable we were studying. An evening spent in this way leaves one with a feeling of ardent hope and glowing satisfaction, stirring one's mind to action and filling one's heart with love. I am looking forward to next week's meeting!

Wednesday, January...., 1942:

I walked home from work tonight with the wind blowing in my face and the snow crunching underneath my feet and peculiar thoughts running through my mind. Watching an old man shoveling off his sidewalk, set me to thinking. Old people with all their knowledge and practical experience really have the capacity for making enormous decisions! But now that they are old, opportunity no longer knocks at their door. They

must be satisfied to take life easy and watch others make the same mistakes that they made. They now have plenty of time to read, but their eyes are poor. They could perhaps write of their experiences for the next generation to read but now their hands shake too much. They are perhaps skilled in many lines but now are no longer physically fit to put them into practice. They take their knowledge and experiences to the grave with them. And with Young People: it is just the other way around and even more alarming. Young people stand on the threshold of life. They have had no time as yet to put their book learning into practical use and it is then that opportunities come! It is then that the most tremendous decisions must be made. They must choose their life vocation! How often we hear people make the remark later in life, how they wish they had chosen a different career or profession or that they had gone to college or learned a trade when they had an opportunity. They must (at least they usually do) choose their life mate! And that is really serious. They know so little about life as yet and about human beings with all their failings. Then is the time that they should read and study and grow and develop, but there are so many things that demand the time of young people that they cannot possibly do them all. And, of course, due to their lack of experience they usually do the ones that seem the most pleasant at the time and eliminate the ones which are most profitable for the future.

Puzzling, isn't it? When we are the least equipped, we must make the greatest decisions and plans, decisions and plans which cannot be altered and along which our life's course must run. But how can we?

Thursday, January...., 1942:

I had a million things to do during my lunch hour this noon, so while I was in the five and dime, I found a vacant seat at the lunch counter, ordered a bowl of soup and waited. Since I didn't have my Beacon Lights with me to read I just sort of listened with half an ear, to the lady sitting next to me who was conversing with the lady next to her. She was telling her all about her sister's husband's brother, who was experiencing all sorts of misfortunes. She said that it seemed as if all the ill winds were blowing his way. Then the other lady said with a wise look, "Well, you know, 'Tis the set of the sails, and not the gales, that tells which way the ship shall go'." Hmmm, that's pretty good ,thought I, I'll have to remember that. Just then the waitress brought my soup. It wasn't so good, tasted rather flat. 'So it's the set of the sails,' I repeated, as I chewed up a salted cracker, 'And not the gales, that tells which way the ships shall go!'

I paid the waitress and felt indebted to the woman with the wise look. Those words put the spice into that meal!

Friday, January...., 1942:

Well, my dear diary, I have a bit of cheering news! I received phone calls from two people tonight wishing to subscribe for Beacon Lights and a letter with four new subscriptions inclosed came through the mail today from one of our active Beacon Lights' Agents in Iowa. That makes ten new subscriptions this week. Isn't that wonderful! Beacon Lights now has 479 subscribers!!!

But the life of a Business Manager is not always so pleasant and *voorspoedig.* I also received a letter from one of the societies complaining because Beacon Lights was sent out so late. They want to know what is the trouble with us, and why we cannot see to it that they receive their copies on time. If I had acted upon my first impulse I would have sat right down and written them a letter asking them if they would like to take over for a while, see if they could do so much better. If, with all the time and effort we are putting in, things are not going right to suit them, they are welcome to handle it themselves and see how things go then . But I didn't! I ate dinner instead, and although I sputtered about it a little at the table, after dinner I reasoned much more sensibly. They are right, aren't they ? Of course, they are! Beacon Lights should come out on time! And since the Federation has placed the responsibility of mailing Beacon Lights in the hands of the board, we, board-members will have to shoulder the responsibility to the finish.

Instead of a source of exasperation, the letter became a source of inspiration ! We want to be worthy of the confidence the societies have placed in us. We want to erase every cause of complaint from the minds of all our Beacon Lights readers. We will show our love for the cause by working together even more zealously, than ever before!

Saturday, January...., 1942:

Received another subscription for Beacon Lights this morning. That makes it 480!

As I was paging through some other church papers this afternoon, reading a poem here and an article there, and trying to borrow some new ideas for Beacon Lights, I noticed that most of them have a department where readers quiz, comment and criticize. That gives a paper a certain appeal which it otherwise lacks. In our paper we call this department the Open Forum, but so far it hasn't received much attention. Maybe we ought to call it the "Question-Box" or something not quite so scary as "Open Forum". Everybody cannot

write poetry, and most of us hesitate to write an article, but all of us can ask questions!

Sunday, January...., 1942:

Sunday is really a wonderful day. It is wonderful to be able to go to church and wonderful to listen to the Protestant Reformed Hour in the afternoon! It is surprising how many problems Sunday can solve for a Christian.

Tonight the minister explained the text found in Revelations, "Woe to the Inhabiters of the Earth, for the devil is come down unto you having great wrath". Ah! That is why everything is so confused and hopeless in this world, it is the wrath of the devil. He is Prince and is working hard and fast, "because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." But Christ is King forever and our salvation is sure. Christ is preparing our place for us in Heaven.

And while we are on this earth it is not difficult to see what we must do. We *must* make decisions every day, decisions which effect our entire lives, and because we feel so incapable of choosing wisely we feel the need of Grace and Guidance.

How shall the young direct their way,
What light shall be their perfect guide?
Thy Word, O Lord, will safely lead,
If in its wisdom they confide.

Sunday is really a wonderful day!

Creaturely Plowmen - Earthworm. . .

by Mr. Clarence De Boer.

How does an earthworm make its home? Why does an earthworm come out at night? Why do we find so many worms on the surface of the ground after heavy rains? These and other questions may have occurred to you at some time. Have you found a solution?

Even though the worm is a lowly and despised creature, there are many interesting facts which arouse our curiosity. In Scripture we find various references to the worm, showing that it is destructive as in the case of spoiling manna, destroying the grape and gourd vines, and causing death to the living. Other portions liken man unto the worm to illustrate his despicable condition.

About eleven hundred species of earthworms are known to scientists; a few of which reach the amazing length of from four to five feet. Some worms burrow to a depth of twenty feet, although most are found in the upper three feet. It is estimated that an acre of moderately rich loam contains approximately 120,000 of these crawling annelids.

Undoubtedly, many of you readers have searched for night-crawlers and discovered how rapidly they move and how difficult it is to pull them from their burrow. What enables them to be so elusive? If we made a study of its body we would find two sets of muscles—the circular and longitudinal—which make it possible for the worm to expand and contract so quickly that its rate of locomotion is surprising. Perhaps, most of you know the body is divided into segments or sections, and on the lower surface of each are four pairs of hair like bristles (operated by tiny muscles) which anchor the worm in the soil. Taking into consideration the fact that the average night crawler has between seventy-five and one hundred-fifty segments (each having eight bristles) one can readily realize the resistance one must overcome to extract it from its borrow.

The introductory question was, "How does the earthworm make its home"? As it makes its way thru the ground it swallows all the particles of soil which occupy the place of its future burrow. From these soil particles it gets part of its food, which is digested in the gizard, that grinds this hard material (just as in the case of a chicken). The remainder of the soil taken into its body is deposited at the surface in the form of castings. Thus, because of its diligent mixing and loosening of the soil, the earthworm receives its nickname—"The

Plowman" among the lowly animals.

A second question is "Why does an earthworm come out at night"? First of all, it does so in order to obtain the remainder of its food consisting of grasses and green leafy vegetables. So even a worm gets its vitamins! Another reason for its nocturnal appearance is the mating instinct. Lastly, it seeks the surface during the hours of darkness rather than light, to avoid its vigilant and hungry enemy—the bird—who, with keen eyes is ever watchful for its prey.

But how can a worm distinguish light from darkness? Has it eyes? No, but it does have "light-sensitive" cells which are directly connected with the nervous system and readily respond to difference in illumination. Anyone using a light in attempting to catch nightcrawlers will have discovered this from practical experience.

Perhaps, some have already solved the question, "Why do earthworms come to the surface during heavy rains?" Of course, all animals, as well as man, need air to live. God has created and adapted them to their surroundings. Most living creatures breathe by means of lungs, and some by gills as the fish. The worm, however, has no special organ, but breathes directly thru its skin, obtaining oxygen from the air spaces between the particles of soil. During a heavy rain the air in these spaces is displaced by water. Naturally, when drowning confronts them there is no alternative but to escape to the surface where air is plentiful.

It might be interesting to know that the earthworm, too, has blood, and it is also red. Even more surprising is the fact that it needs more hearts than we to force its blood thru the body. It has five pairs of hearts in the shape of arched tubes .

An earthworm has an amazing power of regeneration making it possible for the head-end to develop a new tail if severed. Recently, scientists have stimulated worms to produce several heads by making small incisions in the nerve cord near the head . But the answer to one important question I will let you decide—Where does the tail begin?

From a practical standpoint, the earthworm is valuable as a tiller of the soil, as food for fish and poultry, and as medicine. Regarding its agricultural value, Dr. Pfeiffer (a famous Dutch scientist in agriculture) wrote a monumental book on the benefit that the earthworm bestows on the soil. Strange enough, one of our American physicians became so fascinated by the work of the worm in his garden, that he left his profession in order to devote all his time to its culture and study, with special emphasis on its agricultural value. He published a three volumed work en-

titled, "Our Friendly Earthworm". In it he explains how the worm grinds the soil into smaller particles; how it mixes and carries the lower layers of the earth upwards; how it fertilizes and enriches the soil: and how, by making long winding burrows, it brings air to the roots of plants and aids in the drainage of water. When one considers that there are thousands of these industrious laborers working night and day in each acre of soil, one must again acknowledge God's greatness.

Someone has summarized the result of the plowman in these words, "Without the work of this humble creature who knows nothing of the benefits he confers upon mankind, agriculture, as we know it, would be very difficult, if not wholly impossible."

Today, culture farms have been established where special kinds of meaty worms are raised for poultry food and use in fish hatcheries. The oil extracted from a special kind of earthworm is used by the medical profession because of its desirable characteristics, odorless, colorless, penetrating power, and high volatility.

How seldom do we consider God's wondrous work in creating and maintaining these seemingly insignificant and despised creatures which instinctively perform such great and necessary work.

Editor's Desk. .

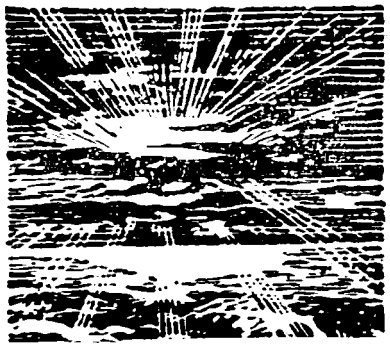
As you may have noted our Feature article for this issue is of a different character; both as to content and authorship. Mr. De Young is a member of the Deaconate of the First Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids. We felt that his article would be interesting enough to appear in two issues and have asked him to conclude it next month. He has made a hobby of tracing the history of the survivors of H.M.S. Bounty and his article tells. . . . well read it for yourself—it's good.

The cover cut on this issue was made from a photograph taken by Henry Pipe, a member of the Fuller Ave. Y. M. S.

Do you like the new department Letters from Camp. It begins in this issue. If anyone is in possession of some newsy letters from which we may take some excerpts, please send them to the Editor or call 56495 and they will be picked up at your home. For those outside of Grand Rapids, please send them in. Thank you! Let's also hear from the fellows in Camp on this. The Young Men's Society of the First Church sends a copy of Beacon Lights to each soldier from the First Church. Do you get your copy each month soldier?

The questions and answers appearing under the column heading: *Do You Know?* were prepared by the Rev. H. Hoeksema.

Bounty - Pitcairn. . .



by Mr. S. De Young

The story of the mutiny aboard H.M.S. Bounty, and the history of Pitcairn Island is by no means a new one. It is an oft' told tale. There are, no doubt, very few of you who have never heard of either the Bounty or of Pitcairn Island.

I became interested in its history through the synopsis of Nordhoff &Hall's "Mutiny on the Bounty" which appeared in The Reader's Digest several years ago. Chas. Nordhoff and James Norman Hall have written what is called "The Bounty Trilogy" consisting of three books, viz. Mutiny on the Bounty, Men Against the Sea, and Pitcairn's Island. The joint authors were American aviators who had enlisted in what was called the Lafayette Esquadrille, during World War I: after the armistice was signed they settled at Tahiti and wrote several novels dealing with the South Seas . They are still residents of Tahiti. Their "Bounty Trilogy" is very interesting, but is as all novels are—dressed up— and does not strictly follow fact. There are, however, very good source books such as Captain Bligh's book (Capt. Bligh was captain of the ill-fated Bounty) Sir John Barrow's History of the Mutiny, H. L. Shapiro's Heritage of the Bounty and many others.

In order to discuss the life and mode of existence on Pitcairn's Island we must needs trace the history of its inhabitants: for only in the light of their past history can we understand their present existence and habits.

Little did the captain and crew of H.M.S. Bounty, armed transport of the Royal British Navy realize what a history-making episode they were embarking upon, when on December 23, 1787 the ship-rigged sailing vessel of 215 tons sailed from Spithead, England.

King George III had upon petition of a group of West Indies planters, Englishmen who owned vast plantations, dispatched and commissioned the then 33 year-old Lieutenant Wm. Bligh to gather a crew and head an expedition to Tahiti to gather breadfruit trees to be transplanted in the West

Indies; breadfruit being the staple food among the Polynesians, it was thought that it would make an excellent and economical staple to feed to the slaves of the large plantation owners in the West Indies.

Lieut. Bligh was a capable navigator who knew the South Seas, as he had sailed with Capt. Cook the explorer. He had, however, a very stern and cruel character which caused his crew to fear and hate him. It was not uncommon for captains in those days to be hard, stern and fearless men, but it is undoubtedly true that Bligh was unnecessarily brutal and unwise in his discipline.

The voyage to Tahiti was one of hardship and endurance, marked by storms and unfavorable weather during which much of the food supply became damaged and inedible. This caused dissatisfaction on the part of the men who were forced to eat unpalatable food and even very little of it. Punishments, whippings and lashings were the order of the day.

After an eventful voyage of 27,086 miles, lasting ten months, the Bounty finally reached Tahiti on October 26, 1788.

The Captain and crew of the Bounty were well received and royally welcomed and entertained during their stay of over five months on Tahiti. The natives were most friendly and helpful in gathering of the breadfruit trees and when upon completion of the mission the day of departure came, most of the crew were very reluctant to exchange their newly found Utopia for the crowded quarters, the gruelling hardships and the meagre fare of the Bounty.

On April 4, 1789, the Bounty, laden with young breadfruit trees planted in tubs on a specially constructed deck, set sail for the West Indies. This objective was, however, never reached, and if it had, our story would, no doubt, never have been told, for trouble was brewing aboard the ship.

It was Fletcher Christian, the 24-year-old Master's mate, who kept the third watch on the eventful night of April 28, 1789. It was he that lit the fuse that set off the chain of events that were to follow. He chafed inwardly under the unwarranted mistreatment he had received which especially now loomed so large when viewed against the background of the recently left Utopian Tahiti. Whispering and intrigue brewed mutiny on deck amongst the most rebellious of the crew who systematically commandeered the arms, chest and burst in upon the captain, binding him and subduing the few faithful followers he had and brought them on deck. Here amid threatenings and abuse he and 18 of the ship's company were put overboard in the small 23 foot ship's launch. Into it went the meagre supplies consisting of 150

pounds of bread, 32 pounds of pork, 6 quarts of Rum, 6 bottles of Wine and a 28 gallon cask of water. A very scanty store for nineteen men. The scene of the mutiny was near the Island of Tofoa, over a thousand miles east of Australia. The voyage of the launch with its terrible hardships, the storms it encountered and the hunger and starvation the crew endured, is a most interesting story in itself. Whatever criticism Lieut. Bligh may be subjected to, his seamanship and courage were beyond reproach. Never in the annals of the sea has anything that can compare with the voyage of the Bounty's launch from Tofoa to the Dutch settlement of Coupang on the Island of Timor, a distance of 3613 miles, been recorded. The voyage took 47 days and of the crew of nineteen, twelve men surmounted the dangers and difficulties of the voyage and lived to reach their native England.

The Bounty, under the command of the mutinous Master's mate Fletcher Christian, was directed toward the Island of Tubuai, about 300 miles south of Tahiti. The mutineers arrived at Tubuai on May 25 and stayed until June 6 when, due to the inhospitability of the inhabitants, it was agreed to return to Tahiti. It was the 6th of June when the Bounty arrived at Tahiti. Having landed and told the natives a fictitious tale in regard to themselves they received on board stores and provisions of every nature and so laden they again set sail for Tubuai, where, with the aid of a few natives they had persuaded to go with them, they were more cordially received. Their stay this time was, however, also of short duration for on Sept. 22, 1789 we again find them anchoring in the bay at Tahiti. This time the crew by pre-arrangement divided itself into two companies; sixteen of the men desired to establish themselves at Tahiti, while nine of the mutineers did not feel that Tahiti afforded a very safe refuge from the long arm of British justice.

So Fletcher Christian, and eight crew members, their Tahitian wives, and six native men as servants, sailed from Tahiti and out of the world. As was mentioned before, sixteen of the Bounty's crew stayed at Tahiti. One of these was murdered by a companion, another was killed by natives and after about a year and a half the remaining fourteen were captured by Capt. Edwards of the H.M.S. Pandora, who was commissioned by the British Admiralty to find the mutineers of the Bounty and to bring them back to England to stand trial. On the return voyage four of the prisoners were drowned in a wreck which the Pandora sustained on Great Barrier Reef near Australia. This left ten mutineers who finally reached England and who were held at New-

gate for court-martial. Four of the men were later acquitted . The remaining six were condemned to die: three of these however, were pardoned by the king's warrant, and three hanged aboard the Brunswick on Oct. 29, 1792.

When Fletcher Christian and his men left Tahiti they had no definite plan or goal—it was not easy to find suitable, out of the way hiding places even in those days. After several places received consideration, Christian, having read of Ensign Pitcairn's discovery in 1767 of the Island which bears his name, believed this to be a suitable place to establish themselves. Here they arrived in January 1790 and after having gone ashore and traversed and inspected it sufficiently, it was agreed that the island afforded not only excellent natural security and obscurity but also was able to sustain them in their physical needs. The island was entirely off the trade lanes and therefore so seldom seen by passing ships. It afforded excellent protection because of its hazardous landing, its steep almost inaccessible shores and its mountainous passes and caves which in case of attack would have proved such impregnable fortresses. It was deemed wise to strip the Bounty and to burn her—which at Flechter Christian's command was also done. So having as it were "burned their bridges behind them" we see these young English sailors with their native Tahitian wives and a few native men attempt colonization—a strange colony indeed and a history still stranger did they unfold in the next few years. God's curse was signally upon them. They lusted, they killed, they murdered, they became drunken maniacs until they all but exterminated themselves—so terrible were their lustful and bloody deeds, that they are all but unprintable. The overbearing and unfair attitude of the whites over against the native men caused jealousy and rebellion on the part of the natives. This resulted in fueds and bloodshed: one thing of course leading to another. The supply of rum and wine having soon run out caused the ingenious mind of an exceptionally thirsty crew-member to discover a method of distilling a very potent spirit from the root of a plant called ti which grew in abundance. The liquor thus obtained caused frequent intoxication on the part of the men and was a means of much of the sinful conduct of the first few years.

Whereas it is difficult to get at the actual facts of the first few years at Pitcairn Island and the different sources are not in agreement on these facts and also because they are so gruesome, it is perhaps as wise to dispense with details and simply to relate that by Oct. 4, 1793 just four of the original nine mutineers were alive—all the native men and five of the white men and some of the women

had met their death so that beside the four white men, ten native women and some children was the total population. The names of the four men were: Adams ,Young, M'Coy, and Quintal. M'Coy was the man who discovered the potency of ti-root. This fact attributed to his death. He became crazed by liquor and threw himself from a ledge into the sea. Quintal's wife fell off a cliff while hunting bird's eggs and he being discontented, desired the wife of either Adams or Young. They naturally resisted his demands and he threatened to kill them both, so they, fearing that he firmly intended to carry out his threats, killed him with an ax.

This left Adams and Young as the only white survivors. They were both and especially so, Young of a serious turn of mind. The events they had passed through, especially the last, led them to repent their dreadful deeds and life.

During Fletcher Christian's lifetime they had held just one church service but since his death this was done regularly every Sunday, but they now resolved that every morning and evening, family prayers would be had, that an afternoon service would be added to the regular Sunday morning service and that they would, as best they could, train up their children and those of their deceased companions in the fear of the Lord and in piety. In this resolution of the survivors, Adams and Young, the education that Young had had stood him in good stead. The partners did not long enjoy the fruits of their repentance together, as about a year after the death of Quintal, Young died from an asthmatic complaint which had bothered him for some time. This left Adams as the sole survivor of the mutineers of the Bounty. He felt this last loss very keenly, but it more than ever disposed him to carry out the resolve they together had begun, namely, the instruction of the colony in God's Word and the living of a pious and upright life.

To be continued.

—BOOST SUBSCRIPTIONS!!!—

Do You Know? ? ?

What is the Theory of Evolution?

According to the theory of evolution all things gradually developed from an original cell of fiery mist. The organic creation developed from inorganic matter, the animals from the plants, man from the animal. This is contradicted with regard to the world of plants by Gen. 1:11, 12. 1. Because the plant is presented as having been called forth out of the earth directly by the Word of God. 2. Because not the seed, nor any preformation of the plant was first created, but the finished plant, yielding seed. 3. Because the text states repeatedly that the plants yield seed and fruit *after their kind.* This means that by the ordinance of creation they are so limited that development from one species into another is precluded.

What Purpose do the Heavenly Luminaries Serve?

The purpose the heavenly luminaries were to serve is, according to Scripture: 1. To divide the light from the darkness. By this is meant the light of day and the darkness of the night, especially as it is on our earth. There is a continuous dividing line between the day and the night on the earth, determined by the earth's relation to the sun and its rotation around its axis. 2. To give light upon the earth. This includes all that is implied in the light as an indispensable condition for all life. 3. To rule the day (the sun), and the night (the moon). This implies many influences of the sun and of the moon on our earth and its life: diffusion of light and heat, formation of clouds and rain, causing winds and storms, tides in the ocean, etc. It also implies the influence on all life of plants, animals and man. 4. Finally, they are said to be for a. Signs, both ordinary (the different quarters of the heavens, signs of the weather, etc.) and extraordinary (symbols, judgments). b. Seasons: different periods determining and regulating the life of the creatures: time for sowing and harvesting, for the breeding of animals, for the migration of birds, etc. c. Days and years: i.e. the division and calculation of time is determined by the heavenly luminaries.

We must bear in mind that the entire presentation of the creation of the heavenly luminaries and of their purpose is given from the viewpoint of their significance for the earth.

What is meant by the solar system?

By the solar system is meant the system of stars that revolve around

the sun including the latter as well as the moon and other satellites. Beginning as close at home as possible we first of all take a look at our moon.

1. The moon. It belongs to the earth, follows it around the sun, and at the same time makes its own circuit around the earth. It can easily be observed through the telescope, for it is comparatively near the earth, about 240,000 miles distant. If we could take a trip to the moon we would find a rather desolate picture, according to astronomers, mountains higher than our Rockies, desolate plains and dormant craters. If we would stay a month, we would find that there is day of 354 hours, with a temperature at noon of about 300 degrees F. This is followed by a night of the same length, in which the temperature drops to 200 below freezing. In that night the earth would appear as a beautiful moon, 15 times larger than our moon.

2. The planets. The system of stars that, like the earth, (and including it) revolve around the sun.

Eight planets are usually considered, though a few others have been discovered recently. The four that are nearest to the sun are: Mercury, Venus, the earth, Mars, Outside of Mars there are hundreds of smaller bodies (asteroids). And finally there are four more distant and gigantic planets: Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune.

Mercury is nearest to the sun and is subject to tremendous heat. It completes its course around the sun in 88 days (its year), and runs at a speed of 30 miles per second.

Venus lies on its axis, so that the same side is always turned toward us. For 100 days it is our evening star, and then for the same period it is our morning star, according as it sets before or after the rising of the sun. It completes its course around the sun in 220 days.

Then follows our Earth, about 93,000,000 miles from the sun, with a year of a little over 365 days. Its axis slants at an angle of 23 1/2 degrees, causing our seasons.

Outside of our orb runs the planet Mars. It is seven times smaller than our earth. Its year is about twice the length of our year. And it has two small moons.

Then follows Jupiter, which is a few hundred millions of miles away from us, is 1400 times as large as our earth: its year is 10, 455 days, and its day and night are ten hours together.

Saturn is our next neighbor: it is 700 times as large as the earth, completes its circuit around the sun in 25,000 days and is followed by six large and beautiful moons.

The farther they are away from us the less we know about our neighbors in space. Uranus is said to be 80 times the size of our earth, and Neptune is calculated to be about 2,700 millions away from the sun!

The Selection of Books. . .

by Mrs. L. Doezema

What To Do About Difficult Reading Matter

Among the books and magazines that constitute our reading material, it happens not infrequently that we run across something that is *too deep*, something beyond our comprehension. There are several factors which might make a book or article difficult to read. The subject matter treated may be very *profound* — dealing perhaps with philosophy or theology. Or the material treated may be something that is very *remote* to us, something about which we have never studied or read about or even scarcely heard about: then we have no past experience of the subject which we can associate with our reading, and the material is not only foreign to us but is liable to be uninteresting. A *dry discussion* on some topic may also be very difficult to read, not so much because the material itself is so hard to read, but because it seems almost impossible to concentrate on something that is uninteresting. It is also possible that a book written about some subject in which we might be interested is written in a very *heavy style;* the language used is far beyond us, so that we have to look up the meaning of too many words; and the sentences and paragraphs may be too long and intricate so that we cannot follow the author's thoughts. But very often the reading matter which we designate as "too deep" is a book or article *pertaining to a religious subject.* We then use the excuse that the reading is too difficult for us, but what we mean is that it is not of interest. We are so carnal that we can understand almost anything that deals with business, finance. entertainment, or other worldly subjects, but when it comes to understanding a book or article written about spiritual things it is too difficult for us. We might as well confess that—we are concerned with the things of this earth.

Now the problem is: Suppose that difficult reading matter is of

interest to us. Not all of it is of value for us: for example, a profound philosophical dissertation has no value for most of us. But often the material has great value; for example, it is very necessary for us to know explanations of difficult parts of Scripture and to understand them, and it is also very essential that we read discussions about the Reformed truth and that we understand that truth. What should be our attitude toward such difficult material?

There is a very simple way out of the difficulty—to cast the book aside and never look at it again. That is the easiest way out, but I do not think it is the right way.

The book may still be very worthwhile for us even if we think we cannot grasp it. It may even be necessary for us to read it. And so by following the path of least resistance we may be missing someting.

As a result of taking the easiest way out of the difficulty we gradually *weaken our character*. It is never good to stop part way on something we are doing unless it is something wrong that we began to do. Once we fail to persevere, there is great danger of failing a second time. And also, failure to persevere in reading a book will lead to lack of perseverance in other things. Failure to put forth real effort makes us slovenly and careless. Besides, when we pass up every book or article that is a bit difficult, we limit ourselves to reading material which is of a lighter nature, and we become superficial.

There is a correct attitude to assume in regard to that difficult book or article. Instead of giving up right away, why not keep on reading a while? Perhaps after we become accustomed to certain types of books they won't be so hard to read anymore. Read patiently, and then put the book aside, not permanently, but with the intention of taking it up again. If the material treated is foreign it is a good idea to obtain some supplementary material on the subject, material which may throw light on the subject which we are trying to read about.

One more thing to remember is to read prayerfully, especially when reading material related to Scripture, and the Kingdom of God. We are not able to understand spiritual things spiritually except through prayer.

Talking over the problem with others who have read the article or book and perhaps understood it better than we did very often helps to solve the problem. Or discussing the matter with others who share in the difficulty may help all concerned to understand it better.

By all means don't give up. Let us put forth genuine effort. Things that require effort are usua'ly the only things worth while.

Our Day. . .

by Mr. P. Zuidema.

WAR! Such is the news of the day. Gains for one party, losses for another. Destruction and more destruction, production and more production, bombing and more bombing, slaying and more slaying greets us each day in our daily papers and is reported to us over our radios. War in the Far East, war in Africa, war in Europe, and war on the sea. To discuss all the happenings in these various conflicts is impossible and neither is it feasable, for we do not know what is actually happening from day to day and at times from one news broadcast to another. This is not possible because of the wide use of censor by all countries involved.

Censorship and Propaganda.

Censorship of the news makes it impossible to truthfully analyze any of it. If one would keep an accurate record of all that is reported the casualties would be so great that it would be hardly possible that there were any men left to fight. There has been so much equipment captured or destroyed that even if these countries were producing war machines as fast as President Roosevelt hopes we may produce them in 1943, there would be few left to fight with. If the armies had actually gained all the ground attributed to them they could have traveled half way around the globe. We must weigh all these reports carefully and follow the movement of the troops on a map of the vicinity in which they are fighting. We will discover that their movement is not nearly as fast as it seems to be when reported by the news reporters.

Corruption In Defense.

Instead of speculating on the possible advances or retreats of the armies let us look at conditions at home. We were not going to make the same mistakes we had made in World War I according to the leaders as well as the people. We would guard against war profiteering. There must not be as much waste. Graft must be kept out of defense activities. Many other musts and must-nots were repeated time and time again since the beginning of this conflict in Europe.

According to the Truman Senatorial Committee report we have bungled things just as badly today as we did in 1917-1918. The report gives evidence of much waste, excessive costs, graft, profiteering, and delays because of strikes.

As an example we quote the following statement from James E. Barnes, representative of the Todd Shipbuilding Corporation.—"If it hadn't been for taxes we couldn't have handled the profits with a

steam-shovel." It has been reported that some corporations have already turned back $4,000,000 out of their profits to the government.

Preparation of our defenses so as not to be caught off guard, as far as necessary equipment was concerned, was our determination in our defense activities during the last eighteen months. At present we cannot supply our small gallant force in the Phillipines with the equipment needed to dislodge their foe. Our air force is not well enough equipped to match our enemy. More astounding yet is the fact that we supplied our enemy with much of the material it needed to develop the air equipment it is using to fight our armies.

Cause.

A three team debating club organized to take care of our defense and war needs (The Council of National Defense, O.P.M., and S.P.A.B.) has been replaced by a one man production dictator, Mr. Donald M. Nelson, to do the job in a more systematic and effective way.

Therefore we find many sections of our country going through a transition period. Some are dissatisfied because industries did not convert to other work before. Others complain because of too much conversion. A change, there is or will be, in industry, commerce and economically in our country and throughout the entire world. Our President's plan for defense production in 1942 and 1943 is an Herculean task in itself. Of course if it is necessary to do it and it is done it also means much more suffering and death in various places in the world. With all his so-called great inventions man wreaks more death and damage than ever before. God allows all things for His purpose and it seems that all the inventions of man are to be used by God to punish the people of the World for their laxity and sin.

HE DIED FOR YOU

He died for you, that Man upon the tree,
Whose head was hung in shame and agony.
No power of words can e'er describe the grief.
It cost that Man your soul to bring relief.

Not thorny crown, not nails through guiltless hands,
Not pinioned feet did break the awful bands.

But rather death: one of the Trinity,
God's Son, made sin for your eternity:

This was the price, and justice had its due,
When once for all, in love, He died for you.

From a Soldier's Correspondence. . .

Camp Livingston, La.
December 7, 1941

Dear . . . . .

I'm sorry that I waited so long to answer your letter. . . . but I made up my mind that I wasn't going to spend all of my time in answering correspondence. You know the first six months that I was here I spent every night until midnight writing letters. I've found that it really is foolish for me to try and return an answer to every letter.

My work down here is just about the same. I have discharged 12 men in the past 2 weeks. Besides that I have each man's record to take care of and the payrolls for each month. . . . The furloughs also take up quite a bit of my time but I would rather have it that way to make the time go faster.

Today has been an exciting day for all of us. Everyone is sitting on top of his radio listening to the reports that have come over the air regarding the Japanese situation. It really looks bad. We haven't had any orders yet on account of it being Sunday but I presume that by tomorrow we will be getting some information as to what is what.

Well. . . .

Sincerely,

* * * * * * * * * *

Camp Livingston, La.
January 7, 1942

Boy, it's cold down here. There was ice almost thick enough for me to stand on this morning. We are still in Camp where we can keep warm. The fellows that are out on guard duty get pretty cold at times. . . . We really don't know anything as to what their plans are but I have a feeling that we will stay in this Camp for a long time for perhaps this will be our Training Center. . . . If we stay in this Camp I expect to be able to come home on a furlough soon. . . .

Sincerely yours,

Corp. John Wierenga,
Hq. Det., 1st Bn., 126 Inf.
Camp Livingston, Louisiana.

Gardner Field,
January 11, 1942

Dear . . . . .

As you perhaps know by now, I have been transferred from Camp Grant to Gardner Field, California. The change was very rapid and not to my personal liking. But you know how much individual desires are catered to in the army.

My work is limited entirely to the Dental Clinic as an assistant, work which I enjoy very much. The hours are ideal, and better still, the environment is as good as could be found in the service.

This morning I attended the service at the chapel and really enjoyed it very much. Even though the Chaplain is of different doctrinal belief, I believe we can still obtain much from his sermons. The message this morning was very timely: "Be ye not afraid of those who can kill the body, but fear God who can kill both the body and soul."

Sincerely,
Pvt. C. Doezema.
Dent. Med. Dept.
Gardner Field, Taft, California.

* * * * * * * * * *

Great Lakes, Illinois
January 18, 1942

Dear . . . . .

We were expected to go to church services this morning, but there are so many fellows here that there wasn't room for all of us. During the church-hour a special flag is flown and while it is up we are not allowed to smoke, have the radio on or play any games.

We have swell barracks, with twenty one men in our section. All facilities are in the biulding—radios, lounges, etc. It is kept very clean; hardwood floors are waxed once every week.

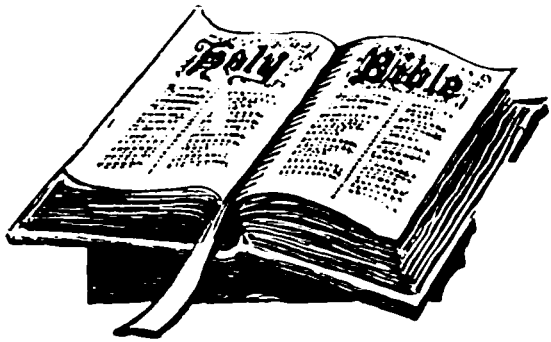
We got here about 10 o'clock Friday morning and after dinner we had another stiff medical exam. Following our exam we received our uniform and outfit: 2 white suits, 2 blue suits, 3 caps, 6 pairs of socks, 12 handkerchiefs, 4 suits of underwear and 2 pairs of shoes; 1 pair black and 1 pair gym shoes. Besides this clothing we were given heavy blankets, a mattress and pillow for our hammock.

. . . .The first night I was here I had to go watch in the barracks from 10 to 12:00. From now on the watches will be for 4 hours each. I get a watch assignment tomorrow.

We get plenty to eat. . . .

Yours,
William Veldkamp.
U. S. N.. Tr. School.
Co. 53
Great Lakes ,Illinois.

Bible Study. . .



by Rev. P. De Boer

OUTLINE XVII

THE PRODIGAL SON

1st Week of February

Read Luke 15:11-24—This outline will deal with the portion of the parable treating of the prodigal son while the next outline will be devoted to that part of the parable that tells of the attitude of the elder son.

The Chief Lesson

Together with the two preceding parables of the lost sheep and of the lost coin this parable also stresses the great value attached to finding that which is lost. For the third time Christ justifies himself in receiving sinners and publicans. The repetition of the same basic lesson in three successive parables serves to emphasize the lesson; this emphasis was certainly needed, otherwise the Saviour would not have spoken of three parables.

However, there is more than bare repetition. Although the same basic lesson prevails throughout the three parables, each parable serves to repeat the lesson in its own way. Moreover, there is climax. In each story the lost becomes a greater part. In the first parable the lost represents one of a hundred, in the second one of ten, while in the prodigal son it is one of two. It is as though Christ meant to say, "Even if the lost were only one hundredth of the whole, it is valuable; but it is one tenth; yes, it is one half of the whole." Before Christ is through with the last parable, he has made it clear in connection with the elder son, that in actuality the lost is even more than one half, it is the whole. As the chapter develops and goes on to its climax, it becomes evident that Christ really seeks only that which is lost; there is no room for the self-righteous at all.

Moreover, there is climax in the three parables also in this respect that while in the first parable the lost is a sheep, and in the second it is a coin, in the third it is a son. A son certainly is far more precious than a sheep or a coin.

There can be no question but the first parable places on the foreground the work of the son as the Good Shepherd. The second parable we believe illustrates the work of the Spirit. Who would doubt but the third clearly refers to the Father. The Triune God seeks His own. The parables accordingly speak of the seeking and finding Christ, the seeking and finding Spirit, the seeking and finding Father.

Elements of the Parable

For the sake of orderly society discussion, we suggest you discuss:

1. The Son's Defection: vss. 12-14a. The request of vs. 12 may have been unusual, but it clearly reveals the defection in the son's heart from his father. The father acceded to the request and gave him his portion (very likely one third of his goods). The sons defection reveals itself in a still more advanced stage when not many days after he departed far from home to spend his inheritance in riotous living.

The prodigal son in the context of the chapter represents the publicans and sinners who had drifted away from the things of God and lived in sin and evil. In the last instance the prodigal son is a proper picture of every elect child of God in so far as in Adam and by his own sin he has departed far from the living God, and lives in spiritual harlotry and whoredoms.

2. The Son's Repentance: vss. 14-20a. The story goes on to tell how when the inheritance was spent, the son began to be in want. First he attempted to satisfy his want by attaching himself to a citizen of that land and even humbled himself to become a herder of swine, and ate of the husks that were thrown to the swine. But, then the son came to himself. He realized how much better off were even his father's servants. Finally, he resolves to return home, to confess his sin, and to plead that he who was no longer worthy to be called a son might be made as a servant. So he at last arises and returns.

Undoubtedly these words contain the elements of true repentance. When Christ seeks, and the Spirit operates in the heart, a want arises in the heart. Pride is not immediately humbled, and man seeks to fill that want with the husks of swine, with self-improvement, good works, etc. But where the Spirit is active, there follows a coming to ourselves. The folly of sin becomes evident, and the knowledge of sin develops together with the desire to confess it and return to God in humility.

3. The Father's Boundless Love: vss. 20-24. In the parable the father full of longing after his son sees him from afar and goes to meet him. Full of compassion he runs to meet his son, falls on his neck and kisses him. He showed

compassion and forgiving mercy even before the son had yet asked for it. The son heartily confesses his sin expressing his unworthiness to be called a son any longer. The father prepares a banquet, a banquet of his love and mercy. The best robe is brought forth, a ring put on his finger, his feet shod with shoes, and the fatted calf killed. "Let us eat and be merry. For this my son was dead, and is alive again: he was lost and is found."

Spiritually the boundless mercy and love of that father only finds its counterpart in the boundless grace of God. The sinner that comes to him he "in no wise" casts out. On him God bestows the banquet of full and complete salvation: pardon for sin, righteousness, and eternal salvation and fellowship with him. Although not worthy to be called sons, the elect are made sons and daughters of the Most High. Already in this life; in all its glory in the day of Christ's coming.

QUESTIONS:—(I'm sure so many questions will arise in the course of discussion, that I feel it is superfluous to suggest any).

OUTLINE XVIII

THE ELDER SON

2nd Week of February

Read Luke 15:25-32. As far as the story is concerned note the following: First, that the elder brother is presented as having remained at home diligently laboring —he had not left the beaten path of virtue. Secondly, that he prides himself in this, and imagines that he ought to have a special reward for his labor. He has earned a feast, not his wayfaring brother. Thirdly, that he shows no love for his repentant brother, no joy over his return; he is on the contrary angered by the glad reception given the prodigal . Fourthly, he reveals a very unchildlike attitude toward his father. He passes by, as of no account, that he continually experienced his father's fellowship. Further, he does not hesitate to reprimand and condemn his father for bestowing his love upon the returning wayfarer. Fifthly, he reveals that his obedience at home was that of a common laborer working for pay rather than that of a son rejoicing in his father's love. Finally, even when the father condemns his action, his attitude persists: he does not enter the feast.

There can be no question in view of the context as to the identity of the elder son. He must represent the Pharisees and scribes who murmured when Christ received publicans and sinners and ate with them. It was to condemn their heartless and wicked attitude that Christ spoke the parables of this chapter. The picture is to the point in more than one way: 1. As the elder brother murmured when the prodigal son returned and was received, so the Pharisees and pub-

licans murmured when Christ received sinners. 2. As the elder brother pleaded his faithfulness, and imagined that he had earned the feast, so the Pharisees and scribes imagined that by their works they earned salvation. The scribes and Pharisees behaved exactly as this elder brother did in his father's house: as servants working for wages, rather than as sons rejoicing in their service. 3. As the elder brother prided himself on his virtue, so the Pharisees and scribes did exactly. 4. As the elder brother condemned the father's attitude and would not enter the feast, so the Pharisees and publicans did.

In a more general sense the elder brother represents those that are the self-righteous in all ages, and who know no place for free grace.

The Problem.

Vs. 31 states, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine". Does this mean to imply that the scribes and Pharisees do enter the kingdom, if the elder brother represents them and no other?

The answer can only be an emphatic No! The self-righteous cannot possibly enter the kingdom, for they are righteous only in their imagination, not in reality. We should remember, as far as the story is concerned, that not every individual item of the story itself may and can be spiritualized. Besides, the elder brother does not partake in the feast, which surely is the feast of grace. He remains without.

It is especially in this last part of the chapter that Christ most pointedly condemns the wicked attitude of the scribes and Pharisees. The lost Christ seeks, and for the lost the feast of grace alone is meant. The scribes and pharisees will not enter: the love of God is not in their hearts.

QUESTIONS:—Vs. 25 speaks of dancing? What kind of dancing was this? Should the Prot. Ref. Churches continue to adhere to their stand against the dance as it is today? Is there any difference between the feast of "the fatted calf" and a feast of "the kid"? Are church members ever guilty of the attitude of the elder brother when a sinner repents? Why should the scribes and Pharisees be represented as the elder brother, instead of as the younger son?

OUTLINE XIX

THE UNJUST STEWARD

3rd Week of February

The parable may be read in Luke 16:1-8. It is well to also read the application, vss. 9-13.

The parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son —and not the least the latter— bring out very clearly that salvation is not of merit but of mere grace. Free grace—that is the upshot of Luke 15. Not of works, but of grace, lest any man should glory.

However, that salvation is a matter of free grace, must not be mis-

understood. That it is not of works does not mean that works in no sense find a place in the scheme of salvation. Such a conclusion certainly would be amiss. Although works never can be the whole, nor even a part, of the ground and basis of our salvation, they are the necessary fruit of salvation. Cf. Heid. Catechism, Lord's Day 32.

That Christians must do good works, must bring forth fruits worthy of repentance underlies this 16th chapter of Luke. In their attitude toward the gold and silver of the world, they must walk as stewards of God. The Almighty Dollar must be used in the service of the Living God. Faithful stewardship—such is the Christian's duty before God.

The Story.

Christ speaks of a rich man who had a steward, i.e. one who was placed over his master's goods with the charge to use the goods, and invest them, to the best interests of his master. This particular steward was accused of wasting his master's goods. The master called him before him, asking for a final accounting and notifying the wicked steward of his early discharge. The steward who had very imprudently been unfaithful and used his master's goods for his own enjoyment, now wonders what he shall do. Before long he will be out of a job, and then what? He cannot dig; he is ashamed to beg. But he has a plan! He will use the last hours of his authority to his own advantage. He will make friends who will receive him into their homes, and that by cutting their bills radically. Although, of course, the steward's deed was a wicked misuse of authority as far as his master was concerned, it showed a measure of earthly wisdom as far as his own future was concerned. The man had never paid attention to what might come in the future, now he made some preparations for the future. It is this measure of foresight and prudence which the Lord commends.

The Lesson.

The rich man is God to whom all things belong. The steward represents man, man who is called to serve his God with all his possessions and good. Christians must be wise ,and administer their finances as those that must give account to God. Not that they must be wicked as the unjust steward was—his prudence was the wisdom of the children of the world. The wisdom of the children of this world is earthly, carnal, self-centered. Yet "in their generations", i.e. reckoned according to the standard of this life, the wicked are often in their service of sin far more consistent, far wiser, far more prudent in their use of the Almighty Dollar, than the children of light are. The wicked serve the world one hundred percent . The children of God often use part of their possessions in sin and evil—

in those things they know are worthless. They do not serve God one hundred percent with all their possessions and goods. In their service of God they are not nearly as consistent and mindful of their purpose as the wicked are in the pursuit of sin.

In vs. 9 Christ makes the application, "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness: that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." At first sight the application seems very strange. We believe the meaning is as follows: By the mammon of unrighteousness is meant the Almighty Dollar, which is generally used unrighteously and in the service of sin. Christ does not mean to say that we must acquire it unrighteously, of course not; it is merely "mammon of unrighteousness" because generally thus used. With that Almighty Dollar faithful stwards of God must make themselves friends. Not personal friends, but friends in Christ. Through Christian charity, through gifts of money toward missionary endeavor, Christians make to themselves enduring friends. When then "ye fail", that is, when you die, then these friends will receive you into everlasting habitations. The everlasting habitations are the mansions above. The poor that have been aided, the heathen that have believed the gospel that could be preached through our financial support, will welcome us into the everlasting mansions. As the steward's friends made place for him, so they will bid the Christian welcome in glory.

Vss. 10-13 contain a still further explanation of Christ's exhortation to be faithful stewards over the unrighteous Mammon. Vs. 13 declares the spiritual impossibility of being stewards of God and of sin both. Men repeatedly seek to unite God and Mammon. But if God is King, the Dollar is not; if the Dollar is, God is not. It is either or.

QUESTIONS:—Does Jesus mean to commend the steward's dishonesty? Prove your point. What is meant by "the mammon of unrighteousness"? What are the "true riches' 'of vs. 11? Is Christian stewardship in respect to earthly things at all outstandingly glorious today? Is tithing sufficient to fulfill stewardship?

OUTLINE XX

THE RICH MAN & LAZARUS

4th Week of February

For the parable refer to Luke 16:19-31.

The Occasion and the Lesson.

Vs. 14 undoubtedly portrays the occasion. The verse reads, "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things; and they derided him". The pharisees had hear the parable of the unjust steward together with the applica-

tion, and with their carnal minds understood the meaning right well. They knew that *their* covetousness had been condemned. Instead of repenting they turned to derision. Perhaps they said, "Another poor man speaking great things because he is a 'have-not'." It was in answer to their mockery, that the Saviour spoke the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

The chief lesson of the present parable regards the sure punishment of Mammon worshippers. While the parable of the unjust steward speaks of the duty of faithful stewardship this parable speaks of the fatal results of wicked stewardship. The rich man receives his punishment; Lazarus on the other hand an eternal reward. Reward or punishment are meted out according as our works have been.

The Various Elements.

Without treating each element in the parable, we would call attention to the fact: 1. The rich man had many possessions, but he did not use them as a faithful steward of God. Had he done so poor Lazarus certainly would have received Christian charity from him. 2. The poor beggar Lazarus died, and was carried to Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died, had an immense funeral, but opened his eyes in hell. 3. The rich man saw Abraham from afar, and asked for a drop of cool water . But Abraham emphasizes the just retribution of his sins—there is no alleviation of the pangs and sorrows of damnation. 4. The rich man pleads that someone may go to his brothers to warn them so they will repent, but Abraham reminds him that they have Moses and the prophets and if they will not hear them, neither would they hear if one rose from the dead.

Naturally there are elements in the story which cannot be applied in every detail. For example, there is no communication twixt heaven and hell; even the parable emphasizes that there is a deep abyss between them.

In connection with the parable note: That hell is a *place*, a place of *torment*, a place of *conscious* torment, a place of *unending* torment. On the other hand: heaven is a place, the place of fellowship with Abraham, a place of joy and salvation, the end of suffering and grief.

QUESTIONS:—Does Jesus assume in the parable that the rich man was a man acquainted with the revelation of God? Should we picture him as a heathen or as a worldly, carnal church member? Does the parable imply recognition in heaven, recognition of the saints among one another? Why is heaven here called "Abraham's bosom"? Why does Scripture refer to the state of the righteous after death also as a being "with Christ", "in Paradise", etc.? Mysticism wishes more than the revelation of Scripture; why is it sinful and how is it condemned in this parable?