

A LITTLE SERMON FOR FARMER FOLK

By Clarence Poe in the Progressive Farmer.

AUGUST is a month for sermons in the South, and I am glad it is. I am glad it is the custom of our country people to set apart certain seasons when the thoughts of all are especially directed to man's immortality, and when the humblest man is reminded of his divine potentialities—reminded that he is a son of the Ruler of the Universe and made but a little lower than the angels, if he but put himself in right relations with the Divine Father.

I believe that the richer rural civilization we are seeking to develop in the South must have a religious basis; that such a civilization must be based on character, and that religious training is essential to the proper development of character. I have always been impressed by what Mrs. Hadleigh says in Warrington Dawson's "The Scar":

I have seen many Christians break away from their church in after life, and having had the benefit of that early training, remain fine men and women. But I have never seen a child reared without knowledge of a God whose character was not defective.

And I ought to add that I believe not only that the richer rural civilization we are seeking to develop must be based on character, but that it must be hallowed, illumined, and ennobled by a conscious purpose to fulfill God's purpose in bringing His Kingdom to earth.

It is well, therefore, I repeat, that we have just had a season in which chosen ministers have reminded our people afresh of the first and greatest commandment given to mankind, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;" that man, imperfect and mortal, shall have as the Master Passion of his life a consuming love for a Father Perfect and Immortal, and so be lifted toward him and grow into His likeness. This is the first great requirement ennobling man: to put the beast within him under foot and unfetter the divine nature implanted within all of us.

This, I repeat, is the first great requirement, the first great commandment but it is not the only one. After mentioning it as the first great commandment, the Master went on to say, "And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments"—(on these two commandments, notice, and not on either one singly)—"hang all the law and the prophets."

It is this great second commandment, love for one's neighbors, love for all mankind, that I wish now especially to emphasize, and to urge our preachers and religious leaders to emphasize. We have too many church members professing a religion of love who do not speak to some neighbor; who instead of forgiving some ancient injury lie awake nights planning to get even; who instead of putting a charitable construction upon the words and deeds of neighbors, live in a perpetual state of suspicion and distrust; or who belong to some "set" or faction in the community which cherishes nothing but hate or bitterness for some other faction.

Especially, it seems to me, are such conditions likely to prevail in country communities. It is not that country people are worse at heart than city people, but simply because the farmer, living to himself, does not mingle with his fellows as much as the city man, and it is always easy to mistrust the man you don't know. It was a wise saying of a great man, "Know one another and you will love one another." I remarked the other day that in proportion to property interests involved, I believe there are ten times as many lawsuits among farmers than among city business men.

No matter what our object may be—no matter whether it is to develop individuals of noble, generous character; or bring about better business co-operation among rural people; or bring about a more satisfying social and community life—in any case there is nothing more important for us than to get our people to put life's emphasis on love rather than hate, on trust rather than on suspicion.

There ought to be more sermons preached from the text which says a man cannot love God and hate his brother; from Christ's saying, "He who loveth God loveth his brother also;"

from that wonderful 13th chapter of First Corinthians in which the old translators erroneously used the word "charity" where all modern translators say the correct word is "love"; and from Christ's declaration that if a man is bringing his gift to the altar—that is to say, if he is about any religious service and remembers that he is not in right relations with his brother, let him first go and be reconciled to his brother, a more important matter than any religious form or ceremony.

"God is love," we are told; must we not infer, therefore, that the devil is hate, and that a man is godlike in the degree that his thoughts and his conduct are ruled by the spirit of love and free from the spirit of hate? "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think of these things," we are told; but too often we find professed followers of this Book who seem to have made the verse read: "Whatsoever things are untrue, dishonest, unjust, unlovely, of evil report; if there be any wrong, if there be any suspicion, think on these things."

I hope everyone will realize that I am not preaching a sermon for the sake of preaching a sermon. I am writing this because I know that while I am constantly urging all forms of rural co-operation on this page, and all the other things that I believe necessary for the development of a richer rural civilization, such plans can succeed only in proportion as the farmer has the right attitude toward life. A gospel of hate and suspicion can get nowhere; a gospel of love and trust can conquer the world.

There are many wrongs to be righted in this world, many oppressors to curb; but we must fight not in hatred for the wrong-doer but in love for the wronged; not in hatred of the oppressor but in love for the oppressed. The leaders whose names are enshrined in the hearts of mankind are those who have battled in this spirit. Lincoln fought slavery not out of hatred for slaveholders but in love for the slaves; Lee fought Grant not that he hated the North but that he loved the South. And so in the battle to secure a juster share of the world's wealth for labor as compared with capital, I do not believe that the Almighty will let complete success come until we go forth not to pull down the rich but to lift up the poor.

I have been worried a good deal about this because our Southern farmers often seem inclined to follow leaders with a gospel of hate and suspicion rather than one of love and brotherhood. If hearing a man's speech leaves you hating mankind more rather than loving it more, or if reading an editor's paper leaves you hating mankind more rather than loving it more, that speaker or that editor is not the right sort of man to follow. I know a man right now, a man who I believe began life with a great passion to help the down-trodden, but who has become embittered and now uses his really great talent to make one class hate another class, one sect hate another sect, and who preaches suspicion of nearly everybody and love of hardly anybody. I know another man whose heart seems to be right but who has seemingly brooded over the wrongs our farmers suffer until he has lost faith in mankind.

We need more faith in our fellows. Let's not believe that among the rich there are many who are consciously dishonest. They have more than their share, but most of them got it by methods recognized by law and not yet condemned by mankind, and the fault is not that they are bad at heart but that they haven't realized that in providing wealth for their families they are condemning other men's families to want. We must fight that such injustice may be corrected, but let us fight, as we have said, not in hatred for the rich but in love for the poor—in love for the toil-worn wives and mothers who need more comforts, in love for aspiring boys and girls who need a better chance in the world.

Let us not believe, I repeat, that the rich are dishonest or knowingly evil. And let us not believe that our public servants are corrupt. Farmers are all too prone to believe evil of officials. Democratic speakers try to make us

believe Republican leaders are rascals, and vice versa, and the result is that the ignorant man probably loses faith in all. There has probably never been a President of the United States of either party who was not personally as honest as the day, and yet evil-minded men have probably assailed all of them.

To all Progressive Farmer readers we should like to make this appeal in conclusion: Let us have more love-inspired men and fewer hate-inspired men. Let us follow leaders who make us love and trust our fellows more and hate and suspect them less. There is not much hope for us to build a great rural civilization in the South on any other basis. The man who loves and trusts his fellows will want to see better schools for their boys and girls; will want to see co-operative enterprises established; will work loyally with others in developing a richer community life; will work for wise laws to lift up the poor and give a fairer share of wealth to those who toil. It is a wise saying of Tennyson's, and as for myself I have long made it a rule of conduct: "It is better to fight for the good than to rail at the ill." That is in line with Van Dyke's saying that we should "be governed by our admirations rather than our disgusts," and what my father-in-law, whom everybody loved, used to say about politics: "I like a man who is FOR somebody, not AGAINST somebody. It is in line with Paul's idea that we should put our minds on pure, true, and praiseworthy things, rather than on impure, false, and blamable things."

Whether in affairs relating to our own neighborhood, the county, the state, or the nation, let us put behind us ugly suspicion and devil-inspired hate and let us go forth with love for God and love for man. It is a safe rule never to believe evil of any man until it is proved and then to have faith that he may yet "win purity out of a stain;" believe—

"That men may rise on stepping stones Of their dead slaves to higher things." So shall we keep our own hearts free from the corroding poison of hate; so shall we spread trust and good will among our fellows; and thereby hasten the good day coming when men shall walk in the comradeship that God intended, and—

"Man to man the world o'er Shall brothers be for a' that."

A Trip to Table Rock

A party consisting of Mrs. T. E. Porter and sister, Miss Nora Porter of Thornwell Orphanage, two daughters, Mina and Inez Porter, James and Otis Porter, Early and James Stewart, Leon and Robert Cassell and Prince Cannon, left for a trip to Table Rock Wednesday, August 22. They met at Holly Springs church early in the morning. The way was long and the road rough, but we were full of life and had a fine time on the way.

When we reached the old hotel, we found the road so rough that we had to walk from there on. Just as we reached the new hotel we found a crowd of fifteen or twenty who had started for the top. We got water and rested a while and were then ready to continue our journey. Of course we had to take our time and rested several times as we went upward.

We caught the other crowd about half way up and then we went up together. When we reached the top about noon we were ready for some cool water, and found a very good spring and made good use of it. Now we were ready to see what was to be seen. We went all over the top and saw the beautiful scenery. The country reminded me of what Moses saw when God took him up on the mountain and showed him the Promised Land.

After seeing all there was to be seen we were ready to start for the bottom. We reached there about 2 o'clock and all of us were tired and hungry. After a short rest we had a good dinner. We went through and around the hotel until it was time to start home. We were all tired but happy. On reaching home we were all sore and sunburned, but we were able to tell how we enjoyed going to Table Rock. ONE WHO WENT.

The superintendent of the South Carolina penitentiary makes a contract for fertilizer every year with the Anderson Phosphate and Oil Co. Clemson College buys fertilizer from them every year. These state institutions want the best and it seems they know where to get it.

A Breezy Letter From the Town of Central

F. B. Morgan, one of Central's most prominent business men, and Tom Robinson motored to Tallulah Falls, Ga., last week and spent the week-end. Mr. Morgan went fishing while there and now he tells a big fish tale. He affirms he has license to tell it, tho.

B. F. Rike and family are moving to Charlotte, N. C. They left last Wednesday and will make their home there. Mr. Rike's many friends wish him the best of success.

C. M. Bowen, a clerk at the Hobbs-Henderson store, is moving into the Rike house this week.

Carl Morgan, one of Central's prominent young men and a recent graduate of Wofford college, left last Friday for Atlanta, where he accepted a position with the Southern Bell Telephone Co. His many friends wish him much success.

Mrs. C. G. Rowland returned last Wednesday night from Lincoln county, N. C., where she has been visiting friends and relatives.

Miss Stacy Shirley returned from Greer last Thursday, where she has been visiting relatives.

Mrs. Annie Curtis of Dallas, Texas, spent a few hours with Fred Garrett and family last Wednesday. Mrs. Curtis is on her way to her father's, Alfred Alexander.

Work to install electric lights here has begun. The holes for the posts are being dug. It is hoped by those in charge that there will be no serious delay in getting material to push the work to completion.

Mrs. Hallack, who is to be dean of the girls at Wesleyan college here, arrived last Tuesday and is now the guest of Dr. and Mrs. Bedford.

High school opened here Monday and there was a large attendance. Prof. William Wallace is principal again. He is very much liked by the people in general.

Tuesday, September 4, was registration day at the Wesleyan college here. Dr. Bedford, the president of the college, says that they have all the students they can accommodate.

Miss Christine Clayton, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. L. G. Clayton, left last Friday for Lawrenceville, Ga., where she goes to teach in the high school. Miss Clayton taught there last year.

Make arrangements to attend the Pickens County Sunday School convention, which will be held here September 15 and 16. The Central people are planning to give the delegates a warm reception.

The Red Cross chapter here is busy doing its bit for the comfort of the soldiers. Everyone who wishes to do good has an opportunity thru the Red Cross.

The Central Roller Mill Co. has made a complete overhauling of the gin; also installed four new 70-saw Gullett gins. The man at the wheel says he is ready for business.

A Good Motto: Do all the good you can By all the means you can In all the ways you can To all the persons you can In all the places you can As long as ever you can.

BULLETIN

Boys Reach Camp

Thousands of boys are pouring into the camps preparatory for training in the big national army.

Among them will be boys from your neighborhood. You can keep in intimate touch with them thru the columns of The Sentinel. A great staff of writers and photographers are busy every day preparing the stories that interest our readers most. The Sentinel will give you complete service each week in word and picture.

Campbell Heads Florida School

Mullins Enterprise.

The friends of Theodore H. Campbell, son of Mrs. H. E. Campbell, will be interested to learn that he has been elected principal of the city schools of Jacksonville, Florida. Mr. Campbell was chosen from a list of candidates from several states. Last year he was superintendent of Pickens school. It is understood that he has had several attractive offers to teach this year, but the one made by the commissioners of the public schools of Jacksonville was more to be desired, and he has made known his intention of accepting.

The bread you get from the flour you make from the wheat you grow is better and purer than any you get from the flour you buy. There is very little appendixitis in sections of the country which produces its own corn and wheat and meat. And there is a reason.

AYER'S First Special Showing New Fall Millinery WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER FIFTH New Models Added Daily Our first fall showing of the attractive New Hats, beginning Wednesday, is not what you would call a formal opening. It is simply a dandy, up-to-the-minute display and sale of the many new things in Millinery which have been arriving for days to supply the early and unusual demand for New Fall Hats which exists right now. We have been selling Fall Hats plentifully for more than two weeks. Our splendid stock put on display and sale Wednesday officially starts off the fall hat season with the store "Where Thousands Buy Their Hats." The earlier you buy the more pleasure and value you get out of your hat. The public of this entire section is cordially invited. AYER'S "Where Thousands Buy Their Hats" GREENVILLE, S. C.

Dr. A. A. ODOM, the Well-known Greenville Optometrist, Will be in Walhalla, S. C., at Dr. Barton's Drug Store, Tuesday, September 11; Westminster, S. C., at Gilreath Hotel, Wednesday, September 12; Central, S. C., at Rikes' Hotel, Thursday, September 13; Liberty, S. C., at Hunter's Pharmacy, Friday, September 14; and at Pickens, S. C., Keowee Pharmacy, Saturday, September 15, ONE DAY ONLY, for the Purpose of Examining Eyes and Fitting Eyeglasses, Spectacles and Artificial Eyes.