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Comparing Two Arks-Ancient and Modern.

CONVENTION ADDRESS.

THIS is a very momentous, timely and important topic. By way of introduction, let us read Matt. 24:37-39. "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming (presence) of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming (presence) of the Son of man be."

It was during the days of Noah—"in the days of Noah"—that they were doing these things. So, during the days of the presence of the Son of Man, not before His presence or after, shall similar things be done. While Noah was present, building his ark, certain things were going on, and while our Lord is present, other things, to-day are going on. We want to prove to you from the Word that similar conditions exist to-day as then. There is a tremendous similarity, but there are, shall we say, hindrances or obstructions to our belief. We may become downcast because certain things are happening. But the same things were happening back there, and Noah went on with his job.

We are given the exhortation to watch. The watching was to be progressively enlightened. To-day we have a particularly significant message, we believe, for the Lord's people. Watch, therefore. Be alert. Be on guard.

Let us read Luke 17:26-30. "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but in the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." That takes us a little further down the stream of time during the Lord's presence, to the culmination of this present age. We believe these days are also numbered, as Noah's were. 1 Pet. 3:20 reads, "When once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." And Gen. 6:3,— "The Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. ' Jehovah intimated to Noah in some way that the end of the age was approaching, and the days were numbered. Noah had 120 years in which to build the ark. So he set to work. He was preaching by his work for 120 years. We think there is a similarity here.

But they got used to those warnings. The same sort of thing went on from day to day, and the old cry went up, "All things continue the same since the fathers fell asleep." But they do not. God's clock is ticking on, and the end of this age is in sight. We know how quickly things can happen in these days; it takes two days to bring to culmination now what used to take a decade. "Who shall stand?"

Let us compare events to-day with what happened in Noah's day. We read that there were giants in the earth in those days. So there are now; great companies and corporations that get bigger every year, and they destroy and trample under foot all mankind. "Wickedness shall increase more and more." So mankind will be really worthy of the stripes of purification that will come.

Noah was "a just man, and perfect in his generation." He was the only perfect Adamic stock, with his family, at that time. The others had become corrupt by intermarriage which was not approved by God. The whole earth was filled with violence. Pick up any paper you like, and you will find that our earth is reeking with violence.

Directions were given to Noah to build the ark, that he might escape the deluge to come. We are given instructions that we may escape the fiery time of trouble about to strike; we believe it is already lit, and progressing tremendously in this earth to-day.

Let us look at Gen. 7:16. They all went into this ark. Noah was given seven days' notice to go into the ark, and at the end of the seventh day something was done. Noah and his family and livestock went in,—”And the Lord shut him in.” You will find that is very significant to-day. Yes, the Lord shuts the door. He is in charge of that door, and however much we would like to open it to our friends and loved ones, it is absolutely impossible. We have to stand and watch, and cannot do anything about it. It is particularly important for us to note that. I remember one elderly Sister who used to say she was glad she was not in charge of this door. It is a good thing the Lord is in charge. Other fine people with whom we come in contact do not enjoy these precious truths as we would like them to. Why? Because the Lord has shut the door. Why? Because of unbelief. We cannot open that door; it is impossible. It behoves us to be on the right side of that door, for the sake of those on the outside.

Noah's preaching was, shall we say, a harvest work. The harvest is the end of the age. There is also a harvest work at the end of this age. The wheat is being gathered, and the tares too, for burning. We know there won't be a deluge, but there will be a different kind of ending to this age. But there are the two harvests.

The days at the end of Noah's age were really a picture of our days. Think for a moment of the international scene. Look at humanity as a whole. It is no secret that there is a cold war on. It needs but a match to make it very hot. Some days ago, one of the leading papers asked a question: was there ever total peace on this earth? Was there ever an investigation into the question whether there was total peace on the face of the earth? The answer was that there had been an inquiry, and this inquiry went back 2044 years. Of course, a lot of nations did not keep their records. But there never was total peace.

You will find that where there is corruption there is violence. Look at events all over the world; there is corruption and violence on every hand. We think these things prove the presence of the Lord for the deliverance of His people at this time. Deliverance from what? Ignorance and superstition. So it behoves us to be particularly alert. There is a great fiery time of trouble to come. Paul says there is a time of trouble coming to try every man's work. But this trouble is going to do other work, not only destructive work, that mankind may have something more in the age to come. We hope the lesson will need no repetition.

The various circumstances which arise combine to bring out the worst and the best in man. Take, for instance, a war. It degrades man, it brings out the animal, the inhuman things. On the other hand, it brings out the human sympathies and compassions, and the best that is in man. But we are all more or less, all of us, creatures of circumstance. No one is exempt. Pilate wanted to release our Lord, but was caught in his own net. The Jews turned on him. So with men to-day, they will also be caught in their own net. There can be no in-between position. The windows of heaven to-day are open. They are dropping enlightenment. Trouble is the result of enlightenment. In the time of the end “knowledge shall be increased.” Men to-day have the audacity to think and to say, “We are wiser and more noble and greater in so many ways than our forebears were.” But these things have been the result of the Lord's doing. Men to-day are not better for the increase of knowledge. They are worse for it, and are no better than their forebears.

What were they doing in Noah's day? A few things are noted here for us. They were eating and drinking. Jesus says to us, “Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat and what ye shall drink, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of.” Well, you know that some people think of nothing else but what they are going to eat and drink.

That is their god. Their stomach is their god. But we are not to be like that.

Noah was preaching. We are to preach, and our preaching is similar. They would say to Noah, “Why are you building the ark?” Rain had not fallen until then, and at first what curiosity would be seen amongst the people. But they became used to it. The eating and drinking became more important.

Then they were marrying. This is a very important event in anyone's life. It is important. These things are not evil in themselves. Building was spoken of. But Noah was building. The social round was very absorbing. Every energy is bent to attain to the circles of the elite, and thus be at the top rung of the social ladder. They thought the ark to be so stupid. Then the merchants of the city were buying and selling. It is the same thing with the stock exchange today. Greed and selfishness eat like a canker into the hearts of men. Do not think that this is confined to one class.

‘The housewife is just as much responsible, too, if she tries to bargain-hunt. That becomes a mania. Labour, wages and conditions, all come under the same heading as buying and selling. Man sells his labour. These things are very absorbing; so much so that they exclude any consideration as to the building of the ark.

Yes, they were also planting. Agriculture, horticulture, and so on, it does not matter whether it is for a livelihood, or a hobby, or for prize-money. Some people think of nothing but their prize dahlias. They were also building in Noah's day. This is a very constructive job. Much building is going on to-day. New homes, parks, roads, hydroelectric schemes, hospitals. It may even be new churches. And yet, it absolutely excludes any thought for the ark which is being built. They have more to do. These things are not evil in themselves. Noah was busy building. We, too, want to be busy building—building the modern ark.

The more important things were excluded in Noah's day until the day he entered into the ark, and then it was too late. To-day, too, these things are in evidence. They told Noah that things were going on just the same as they always did. They said the same thing to Lot. And now, too, things will seem to be going on just as usual until the last member has entered the ark. Don't think you will see some spectacular phenomenon which will astound you. That will not happen. Things will go on right to the very end, as they have always gone. We have to eat and drink, buy and sell. But watch out that they do not exclude us from admiring the building of the ark, and playing our proper part at this time.

“Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto them that are without it is spoken in parables.” The real is taken for the unreal, and the unreal replaces the actual. The literal is taken symbolically, and symbols are expressed as realities. This is well expressed in 2 Pet. 3:3-14.

With most people, their own desires, their own extravagances, eating, drinking, marrying, exclude everything else. They are walking after their own lusts, giving no thought to anything else. “Where is the promise of his presence,” they say, “for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.” But Peter says they are willingly ignorant of certain aspects of the Word of God. Things are not the same, say what they will. In one sense they are, but in a deep sense they are not.

He goes on to show how the Lord will come as a thief in the night. But you don't wait for the thief to come when he is there. Our message is different to all others. The Lord is present. There won't be anything different to what you already have except the progressive enlightenment of your faith, and that also makes our message different to others. The Lord has been present for some time. He will continue to be present, and things will go on just the same, until the very day, just as it was in the days of Noah. Until the day the last member passes beyond the veil, things will go on just the same. It will come as a thief in the night.

You might ask, what is involved, that we may escape the corruption that is in the world through lust? What can we do to get out of this mess, and to help people? There is much you can do. It is very simple, yet it is so hard. Its simplicity makes it hard. It was simple for Noah to take the instructions given to him and get about the work. It was also difficult. Everybody scoffed at him. It is difficult for us, too. It is not our message; it is the Word of the Lord that we give. We believe our message is absolutely true. It is not ours, it is part of the harvest message. Faith; grace; prayer; study; fellowship; fellowship arising out of study; works of love; sacrifice—these things are involved. It will be too much for the majority, as it was in Noah's day. Yet it is too little, for us, because so much is involved. Our little all is not too much.

We cannot hope to establish these truths and make everyone believe them. God will open the door and shut it. The quicker we learn to appreciate it, the more we will see how significant is our part. Our part is tremendously important, because on it hangs a great work, a work of such magnitude we will yet be astounded. It is easy. simple, yet hard and impossible, according as we are spiritually-minded.

What can we do? Nothing else but what our Lord did. Bear witness to the truth. Our Lord did not attempt to convert Pilate; He brought a good confession before him. So it seems impossible for us to establish these truths in the hearts of any. But we can bear witness to them. We do not go out and condemn everything that does not conform to our way of expression. We are sympathetic. Why? Because we believe they have missed out on the chief blessings. They are fine, zealous people in their own way. Yet they cannot see these things.

It is a progressive development, like the building of the ark. We have to take the instructions as they come. First, how to build, the foundation and the superstructure. Then, the time when it must be completed. Noah's ark stood completed, yet the end did not come. There was a certain period of waiting. “Having done all, stand.” There will come a time when you cannot do anything else. But, “they also serve who only stand and wait.” In Noah's case the period of waiting was for seven days after the ark was completed. That may have a significance, we do not know.

Having got so far upon this walk, let us not look back. Let the salt still preserve. You know the story of the destruction of Sodom, and how the Lord proposed to destroy the righteous with the unrighteous. Abraham thought he could find fifty righteous men there. But there were not; nor were there 45, 40, 20, 10. Abraham was absolutely ashamed. He was ashamed to ask such a favour for the sake of such a few. But, for the sake of others it behoves us to hold our faith. “Hold back the winds, until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads.” But there is not much time left. Let us put it to good account. It is easy to perceive that these corrupt and ungodly things have full sway. When they hold the

complete reins of earth's government, it is easy to see what is going to happen. You do not need to stretch your imagination. They are going to unleash tremendous forces of energy upon this world. But it is salt that is doing the preserving. When it is no longer there, there will be a great destruction. After Noah's ark had served its purpose, there was a rainbow. It was a sign of a new covenant. After Christ's ark has served its purpose, there will be a New Covenant too, and it will be for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

"The servant of the Lord must not strive." "The secret of the Lord is with those that serve him." "When they shall say, Peace and safety, sudden destruction cometh upon them." In some way or other the nations of the earth will come to the point when they say, We have fixed everything up; security is ours. But sudden destruction is about to descend upon them all.

So then, Christ's ark is going to do a better work, and serve a better and bigger purpose than Noah's did. The New Covenant will be inaugurated. It will operate for man's uplift and salvation, and that will include all the families of the earth.

We can see these things from the Lord's viewpoint. There is no need to be alarmed. It is not for us to be fearful. We have been warned about these things. But many people are alarmed. They think Christianity is going down because the churches have not converted the world.

But Christianity has never been tried. It is the nominal Christianity that is going down. What is coming to pass will be for the benefit of all mankind, and we think that time is not far distant. So it behoves every one of us to compare the Arks and see the great similarity. We believe that, as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days, during the presence, of the Son of man.

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Custom and formality draw many to the ordinary places of worship: but how few there are that come on purpose to meet with God in His worship, and to find His power in strengthening their weak faith. —M'Cheyne.

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Convention News from Adelaide.

THE Easter Convention at Adelaide was again a very happy and blessed occasion. True to His promise our Lord's presence and blessing upon our gatherings was much in evidence, and we do thank the Giver of all good, for the help and grace and spiritual blessings provided.

It was a pleasure to welcome to our gatherings a goodly number of friends from Victoria, and also a Sister from Queensland. We feel that the meeting together of the Lord's people in Convention is a means of grace, and is a privilege we cannot afford to miss. Two or three of our members were hindered through sickness from being present, and for these our prayers would be for the Lord's blessing and grace to uphold them in every time of need.

After appropriate words of welcome and hymns of praise, and prayer for God's blessing upon our gatherings, our thoughts were occupied in a Bible study on Eph. 2:1-10, which was most helpful. Other studies on the following days were taken from Isa. 51 :1-8 ; Heb. 2:1-9 ; and Psa. 116:7-16. Each of these studies proved helpful and interesting.

The Praise and Testimony and Fellowship Meetings were helpful because they gave us opportunity of collective praise to God, and provided occasion to exhort and encourage one another in the narrow way.

Various of the brethren spoke to us in short addresses which were also very helpful. The topics for the addresses being as follows—"The Power of Prayer"; "Our Lord Jesus Christ"; "The Twofold Object of Gospel Preaching"; "This One Thing I Do"; "Thankfulness"; "The Value of Experience"; "The Risen Christ—Will He Appear as a Man at His Second Advent?"; "Washings"; and "Be Clothed with Humility."

During the Convention a Baptism Service was held at which one of our dear Sisters symbolized in the waters of baptism her full consecration to be dead with Christ. We were reminded again of the step we have taken, and rejoiced with our Sister in her obedience to the Master's call to follow in

His steps of self-denial and abasement now, and in -the hope of being with our Lord in His grand future work for mankind.

The Question Meeting was another helpful feature on our program; and we felt it was a most profitable and spiritually uplifting Convention. The time passed all too quickly until at the Love Feast we bade each other good-bye with the singing of "Blest be the tie that binds," and "God be with you till we meet again."

During the Convention messages of greeting and good-will were received from many brethren in other states and South Australia, and these were much appreciated. The assembly decided to send as a greeting to the brethren and churches the words of the Apostle Paul, as found in Heb. 2:1, and 2 Cor. 13:11. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow.

Fear Not.

Isaiah 43:1-7.

"Listen, for the Lord hath spoken !
'Fear thou not,' saith He!
When thou passest through the waters,
I will be with thee.
'Fear not, for I have redeemed thee ;
All my sheep I know ;
When thou passeth through the rivers,
They shall not overflow.,
'Fear not : by thy name I called thee—
Mine thy heart hath learned ;
When thou walkest through the fire.
Thou shalt not be burned.
'Thou art mine ! oh, therefore, fear not;
Mine forever now ;
And the flame shall never kindle On thy sealed brow.
'Thou art precious, therefore fear not ;
Precious unto Me I have made thee for My glory,
I have loved thee.

--F. R. Havergal.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

New Address for Perth Meetings.

The secretary of the Perth Bible Class has advised that a new meeting hall has been procured for regular Sunday meetings at 3 p.m., and 5.45 p.m. as follows—The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Street, Perth. All interested in the study of, the Bible will be very welcome.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne.

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly assembled together on the evening of April 29th to observe the Memorial of Christ's death. The attendance was very good, and the Lord's blessing was fully realised by all present. Two elderly members who were unable to attend were served with the emblems in their homes, and also appreciated the privilege of the "remembrance," in harmony with the request of our dear Redeemer.

Some previous studies on the last hours of our Lord's life on earth, including the important subject of the institution of the Memorial, from Matthew 26, helped to refresh the minds and hearts of the brethren for the observance on its anniversary.

During the Service, hymns 18, 437, 2 and 414 (B. S. Hymnal) were sung, and the Scripture passages in Mark 14:12-

46; John 18:12-40; 19:1-30 were read and appreciated. Thoughts were then presented showing the Jewish Passover lamb as a type of the "Lamb of God," and just as deliverance came for Israel in Egyptian bondage by the protection of the blood of the literal lamb, likewise full deliverance comes to all who now value the protection of the blood of Christ, and enter into full consecration on the basis of justification by faith in the Redeemer.

Prayers were offered on behalf of the dear members in every place who were likewise observing the Lord's Supper, and following special blessing upon the unleavened bread, and the fruit of the vine, the emblems were partaken of with thanksgiving to God for the gift of Jesus as our Passover Lamb, and also for the privilege of walking in His steps of sacrifice, in hope of the glory of the Kingdom.

Geelong, Vic.

On the evening of March the 29th the Lord again provided a room in this center where the friends assembled together "to do this in remembrance of Him," as our Lord requested so long ago. Two previous studies in 1 Cor. 11:23-34 were the means of rich blessing to those who could get along, and by the Lord's grace helped to prepare our hearts and minds to come to the Lord's table in a worthy manner.

Our service opened with hymn 437 (B. S. Hymnal), then prayer and Scripture reading in Matt. 26:17-31, 36-46; 27:33-50, which was followed by hymn 166. Opportunity was then taken to preface the usual address with a brief summary of the thoughts derived from the studies on the previous Sundays, for the benefit of those members who had missed them. Immediately following the address, the emblems were partaken of, and hymn 399 closed the little observance.

Our numbers were greater this year and it 'was the rich, true fellowship so manifest in the humble desires to obey and follow the Master that brought the blessing from above, realised and thankfully acknowledged.

Adelaide.

The Memorial of our Saviour's death was observed by the Adelaide Class on Sunday evening March 29th. For two Sunday afternoons previous to the Memorial we had considered the chapter in Vol. 6 on the "Passover of the New Creation." As the years go by the deep and solemn significance of the Memorial seems to be more fully impressed upon our hearts and minds.

Hymns were sung appropriate to the occasion, and portions of Scripture explaining the significance of our Lord's great sacrifice were read. Then, after earnest prayers for the blessing of God upon each one present, and for the Israel of God in every place we partook of the emblems with grateful hearts, and with appreciation of the privilege afforded us not only of believing in Jesus, but also.. of being permitted to share in His sufferings at the present time, and looking forward to the privilege of sharing in His future grand work of blessing all the families of the earth.

Perth. -

On the 29th of March, a small company of brethren met in an upper room to commemorate our Lord's death. We realised that brethren throughout the world were doing the same, in remembrance of Him.

The speaker nicely set forth matters which culminated in the death of our Lord on Calvary's Hill. We saw again how our Lord instituted a very simple Memorial, known as the "Lord's Supper," and how our Lord's body and blood were well represented in "unleavened bread" and "fruit of the vine,"—the one needing to be broken and the other shed or poured out.

We acknowledge again how worthy was the Lamb that was slain, and realised how great a sacrifice it was on our behalf. By partaking of the emblems we affirmed the fact that we need to live on the Bread from heaven, and be freed from guilt by His precious blood. Furthermore, we are prepared to follow the Master and do as He did; to be broken with Him, and share in His "cup"; thus to have real communion, that we may die with Him in sacrifice and later live and reign with Him.

A small company also gathered at Fremantle to partake of the Lord's Supper.

Tasmania.

One Brother and three Sisters assembled on the evening of March the 29th to remember again our Lord's broken body and shed blood as our Passover Lamb; also to dedicate ourselves afresh to suffer with Him by partaking of His broken body and His cup.

We had all been refreshing our minds for some time, and when we came together it was more or less to compare notes and for resolutions to strive to make the year before us the best yet.

The article on the Memorial Supper in March "Peoples Paper" had been read and seemed to be appreciated by all.

Canberra.

On Sunday the 29th of March, a small group of the friends gathered together for the purpose of celebrating the Memorial of our Lord's sacrificial death.

The absence of dear ones who were present on previous occasions prompted thoughts of the fact that "Here we have no continuing city." However, the accumulative evidence of events portends that the time fast approaches when the "new wine" will be drunk in the Kingdom by the faithful. Surely such a thought arouses love and sympathy for the fellow members of the Body as we await the end of the narrow way.

Sydney.

We held our Memorial Service at Strathfield when 15 friends partook of the emblems. Reading the Exodus account in chapter 12:1-14, we find that this, in type, brought to light all the main features of the Lord's Memorial, and which symbolize the true Church's common-union, her oneness and participation with and in Christ by the addition of the symbol of bitter herbs with the roast lamb.

From the hour when our dear Lord broke the bread and shared the wine with His disciples, in the humble upper- room, apart from the world, the history of the true Church began. They were in Christ, as we are privileged to be now.

Glenbrook, N.S.W.

Once again, under God's guidance and blessing, we had the privilege of partaking of the Memorial Supper; eight were present, and in prayer we asked God's blessing to rest upon all the dear Israel of God, for we realised that we were all being drawn together by the invisible bands of God's great and mighty love.

Truly as we put our trust in the Lord we can feel that our Lord's prayer on our behalf in John 17:20 is resting upon us at this present time, so we can praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Queensland.

Once again, under the Lord's guidance and blessing, 11 of the dear ones assembled to partake of the Memorial Supper. It was a time of very great refreshment and blessing to all present, those who had been long in the narrow way, and especially those who had more recently made their consecration to walk in the footsteps of our dear Redeemer.

The usual lovely hymns were sung, and the inspiring words repeated on the loaf and the cup were especially appreciated by some new friends.

Baptism Service.

IT was a joy for the Melbourne friends to attend a Baptism Service on Saturday afternoon, the 28th of March, when two of our friends symbolized their consecration to be dead with Christ, in the waters of baptism. We were sorry that another member from a distance was not able to be present to take the same symbol on that occasion.

It is always refreshing to find others who come to a full hearted appreciation of the sacrifice of Christ, and accepting Him as their personal Saviour, realise that their faith in Him is a means of justification in the sight of God, as expressed so clearly by the Apostle Paul—"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1) It is from this condition of justification that sincere believers are invited to take the further step of full consecration, as shown by the same Apostle—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, (justified brethren) by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.)

Having accepted the invitation to present oneself to God in full consecration, such a follower of the Master could rightly take the symbol of water immersion, and indeed, should delight to do so, as our two dear members did on the happy occasion recently. Thus, it is seen, that the real baptism is death baptism—baptism into Christ's death (Rom.

6:3) ,—and the immersion in water is the fitting symbol which follows, and indicates what has already taken place in the heart of the consecrated follower of the Master.

How beautifully did the Psalmist portray the attitude of the saints of this Gospel Age, when he wrote—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death (daily dying) of his saints." (Psa. 116:12-15.)

The Carpenter's Shop.

TN a carpenter's shop the tools are overheard to I discuss in a critical spirit the greater or less importance of the tasks for which they are respectively fitted.

Dr. Gimlet, a philosopher of a penetrative mind, had been speaking in terms of depreciation of the work of Brother Plane. He continued, I know he is very active, even fussy, and to look at the shavings flying about you really would think that he was doing great things, but I notice his work is all on the surface, whereupon the Rev. Heavy Hammer reminded Dr. Gimlet that although his powers of penetration were indisputably great his influence was confined to a very narrow circle. This remark provoked a quick retort from a sharp pointed nail, who said that Mr. Hammer's preaching was far too controversial; he is never happy unless he is having a knock at somebody. Brother Chisel was roused by this criticism of his friend, and declared that only those who were closely associated with Brother Hammer could duly appreciate his strength and perseverance. He and I have been colleagues more than once, and to his powerful influence I ascribe whatever good I have been able to do. Then a horseshoe that happened to be lying on the workshop floor said, I should have derived little benefit from all Mr. Hammer's vigorous preaching had it not been for the zealous labours of another of his colleagues; I refer to Brother Bellows. It was, as I listened to him, that the fire began to glow in my heart; it seems to me that warmth is the great essential.

As the discussion proceeded, Professor Whetstone, who was busily engaged in sharpening young axes, had been observed to pause in his work. His voice was now heard, "Do not be offended when, in spite of all the confident statements first made, I maintain that neither energy nor fire, nor both together, are sufficient; the tool must have a fine polish and a keen edge if it is to do efficient service." This was too much for Brother Screw, who spoke with a strong provincial accent, which betrayed his want of culture. I know that I have precious little polish, and I also know that I should object to any of old Whetstone's grinding; my motto is: Lay hold whenever you have a chance, and when once you lay hold never let go. Two close friends are heard conversing in an undertone. Their names are Rule and Square. The latter now ventured to remark that in their estimation all who had previously spoken had the capacity for doing excellent service, if only they would submit to Method and Span. Brother Rule and I have observed with regret that harm is continually being done by those people who will not work within regular line. Why, replied Brother Hammer,

the only rule that I ever had is "Hit hard," and I've driven many a nail home. But he forgot that even he was guided by a Higher hand.

At this moment the carpenter's son entered the workshop. In his presence all sounds of strife are hushed. He is making the model of a Temple. Skilfully he takes hold of now, Hammer, then Plane or Gimlet or Screw, the one giving place to the other as the progress of the work required, and each finding his special reward as the building grew in beauty and in strength.

(Parable adapted from the German by Professor Tasker.)

Question Box.

Question.—In Matt. 6:7, our Lord tells us, “When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.” The Apostle Paul, writing to the Church (Col. 4:2), exhorts that they “continue in prayer”; again we read of the widow who was heard for her importunity. (Luke 18:2-5.) Is this a suggestion that we should importune? How could we importune without repetition?

Answer.—We are to recognise a distinct difference between the “vain repetitions” of the heathen, which our Lord condemned, and the “continuing instant in prayer,” “in everything giving thanks,” in “praying and not fainting,” acts which our Lord and the Apostles enjoined. (Rom. 12:12; Luke 18:1, etc.) This difference the Lord illustrated in the case of the woman who came to a judge repeatedly, asking that he avenge her of her enemy. Although the judge was not a man who would act justly, yet he did her justice on account of her persistence. In commenting upon her course, our Lord said that if an unjust judge be moved on account of importunity to do justice, how much more a just judge!

The thought illustrated in the parable is that of a person who cries to the Lord that injustice is being done—as with the Church at the present time. We all realize that we are suffering injustice. We cry, “O Lord, deliver us! deliver us from the Adversary!” Will God never deliver the Church? For nineteen hundred years the Church has been praying thus; and God has not answered this prayer. Will He never answer? Our Lord intimates that we should not lose faith. We are to have full confidence in His promises. Injustice will not forever continue. The time will come, we are told, when Satan shall be bound and deceive the people no more.—Rev. 20:2, 3.

Therefore we do right to pray, “Thy Kingdom come,” week after week, year after year, century after century. To grow faint or grow weary in prayer would not be right. The proper course is to believe that God will fulfil what He has promised; and that all will come out in harmony with His will.

On another occasion our Lord gave a parable wherein one asked his neighbor for food and was refused. (Luke 11:5-8.) He asked again. Finally the neighbor gave it to him on account of his importunity, on account of his patiently persisting. This parable, also, emphasizes the thought of importunate prayer. God has the blessing, and not only is able to give it, but has promised to do so. The delay in granting the request is because His due time has not come. Hence we are not to give up nor to become weary, but to be constant in our prayers.

This is all very different, however, from the “vain repetitions” which our Lord condemned. But we do not think that our Lord desires us to use repetition in our prayers. Some people use the words, “Our Father,” or “Our God,” or “Heavenly Father” more frequently than would seem to be good form—even using them in every fourth or fifth sentence. Their prayer would sound better on earth if they did not use these repetitions; though, no doubt, the repetitions would be understood in Heaven; for these people seem to be as earnest as others.

Sometimes, after worship and prayer, the one called upon to ask the blessing at table practically repeats the prayer. This course would imply that the person had forgotten that the general blessings had been asked in that prayer, and that he should be asking a blessing on the meal. To ask a blessing on the meal is not to pray in the ordinary sense of the word. Whoever “asks the blessing” should ask something in connection with the food and not attempt to pray for neighbors, relatives, etc.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greetings Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

There are eight varieties of these cards as follows:—

“Just for To-day,” “One Here and There,” “How Readest Thou?,” “The New Leaf,” “The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love,” “Drop a Pebble in the Water,” “The Touch of the Master’s Hand,” and “My Bible and I,” These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid. Samples sent on request.

Hitherto and Henceforth.

“Hitherto the Lord hath blessed us.”—Jos. 17:14.

Hitherto the Lord hath blessed us,
Guiding all the way;

Henceforth let us trust Him fully,
Trust Him all the day.

Hitherto the Lord hath loved us,
Caring for His own;

Henceforth let us love Him better,
Live for Him alone.

Hitherto the Lord hath blessed us,
Crowning all our days;

Henceforth let us live to bless Him,
Live to Show His praise,

—F.H.R.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 N. Sundays 10 a.m. Sydney, 2KY, 294 IL., 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 485 H. 9 a.m.

Perth, SKY, 227 H., 4.45 p.m.