

"THE EARTH SHALL YIELD HER INCREASE."

THE following is a letter from a brother in the Truth illustrates well how all that the Lord has promised respecting food for the restored millions of our race now in death can be fulfilled:

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

I have recently learned of a matter which I believe will be interesting to you. It is this:

About ten miles from Philadelphia there is a small farm of fifteen acres, the owner of which has brought it to an extremely high state of cultivation. The results are almost past belief. The matter has been attracting the attention of the United States' officials, who have been keeping tab on the wonderful doings of this farm for the past four years.

I visited the farm and met the owner personally. He is a Minister in the nominal Church, and manages this little farm additionally. On the fifteen acres he was supporting, at the time of my visit, twenty-nine head of cattle and three horses. He raised all the feed for this stock on the fifteen acres, and sold additionally considerable hay and grain which he was unable to use. He has a good-sized house and barn on the premises, and last year, besides maintaining himself and family from the proceeds of the farm, cleared from it a profit of twenty-one hundred dollars. He has brought his farm to a condition where it produces three crops annually without expending a dollar for fertilizers of any kind. The vegetation is so heavy and luxuriant that weeds are completely choked out. There is scarcely a weed to be found on the place. All this has been done on an ordinary clay soil in only twenty years. About him on every side are farms many times as large where the owners use large quantities of imported fertilizers,

gather only one crop a year and only just manage to get along comfortably.

I at once thought to myself, this is an illustration of how the wilderness shall blossom as the rose and the earth yield her increase, and it is coming to the attention of mankind at just the proper time – at the beginning of the millennium. I suggested this thought to the minister, but to my sorrow he replied that he had no faith along that line; that he was in accord with Henry Ward Beecher's view that the fall of man must have been upward, and that we are gradually attaining by evolutionary processes the perfection of our race.

I replied that my loyalty to the Scripture teaching that man passed under Divine condemnation through disobedience, so that he needed the redemption which our Lord Jesus accomplished as a ransom for all, and that he still needs the blessing of restitution to bring him back to the image and likeness of God in which he was created, forbade me to accept any such view.

The minister replied that he once held similar views regarding the atonement until he went to college, and that there he learned to view matters very differently. Seeing that he discarded the foundation doctrines of the Divine Word, I felt that it would be useless to make further effort to interest him in the glorious Plan of the Ages. I said to myself, "Here is one of those mentioned by the prophet when he said, 'A thousand shall fall at thy side.'" This friend has fallen. Doubtless many others are similarly falling away from their relationship to our Heavenly Father through a loss of faith in the Redeemer he has provided. I at once applied to myself the words of the Apostle, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"; and while rejoicing that I still stood firm on the ransom, I uplifted my heart in prayer to the Lord that he would ever keep me loyal to himself and the great Plan of the Ages of which our dear Redeemer's sacrifice is the center and foundation.

Returning to the subject of the farm, I made a little calculation as follows: In a little country village a total annual income of two hundred and fifty dollars, used carefully, will easily maintain for one year five adult persons who enjoy good health, even under present unfavorable conditions as respects the quality and prices of commodities. Thus this little farm of fifteen acres would maintain the minister's family of say five persons and forty-two other individuals or forty-nine in all – an average of about three per acre or one thousand nine hundred and twenty persons per square mile.

The total land surface of the world is 52,299,431 square miles, and doubtless under the Divine government nearly all of this will be reclaimed for purposes of cultivation; but let us suppose that one-third of it will always be waste land. This leaves 34,866,287 square miles for cultivation, and, on the basis I have suggested, would support an army of 66,943,271,040 people.

It seems to me that the preacher's little farm comes pretty near making a basis for a mathematical demonstration of the earth's ability to yield crops sufficient for the support of all who will be found worthy of lasting life at the conclusion of the millennial age: even without allowing for supernatural power and bettered conditions.

CLAYTON J. WOODWORTH.

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