

[R3668 : page 350]

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED. CONCERNING TOBACCO.

Question. – Is it wrong to grow tobacco?

Answer. – The growing of tobacco is on a par with the selling or using of it. It is not forbidden in the Bible and is contrary to no human law. It is not, therefore, a question of conscience, except where found injurious to health. Nevertheless, we feel a repugnance to the use of tobacco, with its chewing and spitting and abominable odor upon the breath and the clothing. We believe that Christians as they grow in *grace* desire to be clean every whit – outside and inside, and to give as little offense to others as possible. Such we generally find preferring other business, other food and other habits. We commend this course, wherever reasonable and possible, as being in line with what we believe would have the Lord's approval. But it is not a question of conscience, but of expediency, and each must decide for himself, and often according to circumstances beyond his reasonable control.

SHOULD WE VOTE?

Question. – Should the Lord's people vote? Would it be wrong? or would it duty?

Answer. – Conscience may have to do with this question on either side. And conscience never should be violated. It may be educated, however; nay, it is our duty to educate conscience, and God's Word is its best instructor. The spirit of God's Word is to the effect that the elect are a "new creation," whose "citizenship is in heaven," and all of whose interests, temporal and spiritual, [R3668 : page 351] center in "Thy Kingdom come." Assuredly we must have dealings with the world to earn our living decently, but all of this class should be on the alert to foster the interests of the new nature,

and experience proves that the less we have to do with the "world" and its politics the better will be our spiritual health. What will our votes amount to anyway? Even if we all voted the one ticket we would change no election. Our advice then is that as nothing is to be gained and much time and spiritual energy sure to be lost by dabbling in politics, the consecrated will be exercising the spirit of a sound mind in the wisdom from above in leaving the world's affairs to its own care. See further DAWN Vol. I, chaps. 13 and 14; also Vol. VI., pp.593,594.

PRAYING FOR PHYSICAL HEALING.

Question. – Why might we not pray for physical healing if we felt sure we could thereby be of greater service in the Harvest work?

Answer. – We need to analyze our thoughts, and to remember that they are deceitful above all things; that they sometimes endeavor to cheat us as to their real motives. It seems to us that the craving which we all would have for physical healing is considerably of a piece with a desire we all would have to see some miracle performed – a desire to walk by sight and not wholly by faith. On the other hand, to our understanding the Lord's wish is that we of the Gospel age shall walk wholly by faith and not at all by sight. Hence the signs were permitted in the beginning of the age, for the establishment of the Church, and were subsequently dropped that the Church, established by the Word of the Lord in its hands, should walk by faith entirely. Another thought which might assist the craving for miracles of healing would be the relief from pain but this would be in the nature of a selfish wish also; and if the Lord should relieve from pain it would be one step toward relief from disease, and if disease were eradicated why not also pray for relief from homeliness, crooked heads, bad dispositions, etc.? In a word, why not ask the Lord to make us over again? But this, as will be perceived, would be restitution, which is not a part of the divine order now, but God's

arrangement for the next age. The object, as we have seen, of the calling of the Church in this age is to sacrifice, and we are to remember also that it is not the new creature that is sacrificed, but the old creature – the new creature is renewed day by day. The Lord heals all its diseases; that is to say, he cooperates with us for the healing of spiritual defects, and promises a completion of the work in the resurrection of the spiritual body. This is what we get in exchange for the surrender of earthly rights of restitution. We should be glad indeed that, coming to the Lord and being justified by faith, our poor old bodies, already almost dead, will be permitted to go down into death and the matter reckoned a complete sacrifice, whereas it is only a fragment. If, on the contrary, we were restored to physical perfection, it would mean that we would have a great deal more to sacrifice before we could possibly expect to die. Hence it is more favorable to us that the Lord reckons our bodies perfect and then sacrificed, because we have that much the less sacrificial service to perform, yet counted of him as complete sacrifice.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE "HEAD" TO THE "BODY."

Question. – The subject of our relationship with Christ, he as the Head, we the members of his body, is not clear to me. How could the Lord be Head over a body which was not in existence when he was glorified? How can the feet exist in the world without the remainder of the body likewise?

Answer. – To the natural mind, uninstructed from the standpoint of the Scriptures, it would seem inconsistent to say that Jesus, the Head of the body, was glorified before any members of his body had even been called; but when we view the matter from the Scriptural standpoint we see that this is the very thought presented, and it is the essence of wisdom, therefore, to accept the divine statement and to harmonize our natural reasons therewith. Similarly the entire Church, from our Lord's day to the present time, is counted as the one body

of Christ – which body we are, the living stones, being polished and fitted and prepared for the glorious Temple, not yet completed. As represented in MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. I., in the Chart of the Ages, this union between Christ and the Church is a perpetual one throughout this age, the lines of the Head being preserved in the Church which is the body of Christ, as the lines of the small pyramid are preserved in the lower parts of the same. From this standpoint it is entirely consistent to speak of the living members of the Church as being the "feet class," as it is consistent to speak of our Lord at his first advent as being the Head of a body not then even called. There are many Scriptures, when you come to study the subject, which speak of the last members of the Church as "the feet of him." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." – See DAWN, Vol. II., pp.141,142.

It is in this day in which we are living that the "feet" are in special danger of stumbling, as stated in Psa. 91:7. – See DAWN, Vol. III., p.241.

There are two views which may properly be taken respecting the members of the body of Christ. One views them chronologically from Head to feet, as also the seven churches of Rev. 1-3. The other view recognizes the Church at any particular point of time as a complete Church, having in it the representatives of the various functions of the entire body, as described by the Apostle in 1 Corinthians 12. In this latter view some of the members of the body of Christ at the first advent were more important members, representing the quality of eye, ear or tongue, hands, etc., while other members represented less important functions of feet, legs, etc., as the Apostle explains, and this has been true of the Church in any and every stage of its existence, and is true today. But these two separate views of the matter should not be confused nor made to conflict with each other.

