

JOHN GREEN'S POCKET

A Story From Fact for Whom it May Concern.

JOHN GREEN was an honest, industrious Kansas farmer, rather brusque of manner, but withal kind-hearted and whole-souled, as became the zealous follower of Christ that his neighbours admitted him to be.

On this Sunday morning, as he followed his plow back and forth across the sixty-acre field bordering the country road, his thoughts were divided between the ever-present problem of making "both ends meet" and the outlook for the Christian in the bright and better state he hoped would be ushered in at no distant date.

"Sunday morning," did I hear you say?—Yes. For farmer Green was not only a believer in the soon coming of Christ, but was also a firm believer in the good old Bible doctrine of the seventh-day Sabbath, and consequently had rested from his labours the day before.

The fact of John Greens working on Sunday may not affect you,—who are accustomed to such things,—as it did a certain stranger who happened at this identical hour of the day to be passing along this particular road at this particular section of it. As his eyes rested upon the approaching plowman, mild astonishment was mingled with a rising indignation that any respectable man, as this farmer appeared to be, should show such disrespect for the day. In his time he had met a few men godless enough to work occasionally on Sunday, and being a strict church-goer himself and zealous for what he believed to be right, had always grasped the opportunity,—or made it if one was not ready made,—to chide them severely for their conduct. Here was an opportunity to be improved. Riding up to the fence, he awaited the approach of Farmer Green.

As the latter arrived within hailing distance the stranger called, "Hello! Don't you know this is the Sabbath day?"

"No!" came back the decided reply, as the plow was tipped at the end of the furrow,

“that is something I don’t know.” And reaching into a convenient pocket, John Green pulled out a tract, which he handed over the fence to the astonished stranger. The tract was entitled, “Sunday Not the Sabbath.” Without further remark our farmer friend turned his horses’ heads and resumed his plowing.

The traveler began reading, and his astonishment grew apace. Upon the return of the plow he at once asked, “Why wasn’t this known before?” Without a word, John Green went down into his pocket, handed out a tract with the caption, “Why Not found Out Before?” and proceeded unconcernedly on another round across the field.

The stranger sat as if spellbound, slowly turning the leaves of the little document until the walking depository returned and gave him the opportunity to remark: “But didn’t Christ instruct the apostles that Sunday was to be the Sabbath for Christians, and didn’t he always keep that day after His resurrection and teach it all through the New Testament?”

As if the query were anticipated, there promptly came forth from the mysterious information bureau another tract, and with the brief remark,, "Look that over." John Green handed over the fence "The Sabbath in the New Testament," and with a "Haw, Bill," proceeded to turn over another furrow.

Completely nonplused and bewildered by this sudden shock to his lifelong beliefs and habits of thinking, the dazed traveler read until the enigmatical plowman came again within ear-shot. As one after another his questions had been so astonishingly answered, his increasing wonder had taken on curiosity approaching awe at the man himself. He could contain himself no longer, and in a peculiar tone of voice said, "Well what are you, anyway, for you seem to be well loaded?"

"Oh!" came the reply, "I'm only a busy farmer. It ain't always convenient for me to stop and answer questions or go into arguments, so I keep a few of these tracts with me. They do the work better than I can, and it saves my time."

"And you keep Saturday for Sunday, I—"

"No; I keep the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, the day before Sunday."

"Of course that is what I meant. Well I am astonished, I must say. One of these tracts speaks of Seventh-day Adventists. I have heard of them before. Are you one of them?"

"Yes, I am glad to say."

"Why are you called 'Adventists'?"

"Because the Bible teaches that Christ will return very soon, probably in our day. This will tell you about it," and once more the handy pocket was visited, and the stranger was given a tract, headed "The Coming of the Lord." "Take them along with you," John Green added, "and this, too. You will find plenty there to keep you studying awhile." The last one read, "Scripture References"

The stranger asked a few more questions, thanked his newly formed acquaintance, took his address and rode away.

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And I sat thinking, and this thought came: There are other John Green's, and busy men and women everywhere; and there are now many more little tracts than the John Green of a score of years ago could obtain,— precious little messengers of truth, — and there are opportunities, hundreds of them, and hungry souls as dear to the Master as you or I. Do you catch the suggestion? have you a pocket?