

WILL YOU COME AND WALK WITH ME ?

By Dr. JOSIAH OLDIELD.

ONE of the most charming of refrains that appeals to me in one of our songs is the one which keeps on asking that same question : " Madam will you come and walk " and " Madam will you talk," " Madam, will you walk and talk with me."

If there is one thing that has struck me in life it is how people of the same thought and the same character and the same ideals tend to draw near to each other and feel happy comradeship in walking and talking together.

In the writings of that wonderful, inspired old man, who wrote " the Book of Genesis," a special inspiration is shown when he pictured to himself the Garden of Eden, the paradise of the early world, the happy vegetarian man and woman, whom he called Adam and Eve, and of whom, in their delightful comradeship, he felt that he could rightly say that " They walked with God in the Garden at eventide."

What a privilege to be able to say " I walk with God," and yet that great lesson which is taught in Genesis and which is now being taught by scientists the world over shows that people cannot " walk with God " unless they are in comradeship with Him.

The comradeship, laid down in that historic scientific description of the origins of man, made it perfectly clear that to man and to woman were given the kindly fruits of the earth to live upon, and to enjoy, and to be strong upon, and upon which to go forth and beget a great race of men and women.

It was a man and a woman so living that could be described as " walking with God in the eventide in the Garden."

I have been saddened so many times by the sight of a young vegetarian, full of enthusiasm, and conscious of the dignity of not being obliged to eat dead bodies for his sustenance, looking out for a comrade that, Adam-like, he might find an Eve to be the mother of his children of the next generation.

Woman-like, many a girl would turn her eyes lovingly to this young Apollo, and in the enthusiasm of early affection would say, " My dearest one, how you live will I live, what you eat will I eat ; your creed shall be my creed." So they marry, not because the girl has a conscientious knowledge of being wishful to live the higher life, but merely because, through affection for her boy, she will obediently follow in his footsteps.

As so often happened, later on, when the prospect of an addition to the family has affected the nervous balance of the prospective mother, his wife would come under the care of that crowd of silly old women who go about preaching the ignorance of the past while knowing nothing of the culture and ideals of the future. Their stock cry always is "The food you are living on may be all right for you,

but is not enough to sustain two lives, and you now have a baby to think of." When this foolish phrase keeps being reiterated the woman, in her susceptible condition is influenced, and so she comes home eventually and says to her husband—"Darling one, do you mind if I have a little bit of chicken, only a little bit?" Man-like, he naturally says yes to her request, and the serenity and peace, the harmony and simplicity of the home, are lost for ever.

The chicken is replaced by sausage, and then a step lower by bacon; and so the household becomes one either divided into two, or the man gives way to his surroundings, pockets his principles and says: "I once was a vegetarian, but circumstances have compelled me to eat meat."

And so I come back to the beginning of my thought and ask those whom I meet, "Will you come and walk with me?"

The wise writer of Proverbs has said: "Can two walk together unless they be agreed?" The answer is "No." They may saunter through life in passing comradeship, but they cannot walk together as Adam and Eve walked with God in the cool and quietude of the eventide.

So would I impress upon every young man and every young woman. Do not enter into the bonds of matrimony with anyone who has not tested the convinced creed of the higher life. Your future life's comrade must see the light. She must be ready to walk with you. She must be conscious of the principles involved. She must adopt the new creed from the high land of conviction. Then ever may you and she, or you and he, walk happily together for the remainder of your lives.