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Marion Browning

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The Christian Messenger

VOLUME 1.

CHENEYVILLE, LA., JULY, 1928.

NUMBER 10.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER

Published in the interest of the Churches of Christ
in Louisiana

Marion Browning _____ Editor and Publisher

Subscription, \$1.00 per year. Advertising rates on
application.

Application made for entry as second class mail mat-
ter at the postoffice in Cheneyville, La.

We were sorry to miss you in June, but hope you
will appreciate getting the July number at this time.

We are anxious to get the good people of the state
to see the need of having this paper come regularly
into their home, and thus increase in a large way
our subscription list. This paper has had many hard
knocks, and still has its problems, but still it is plod-
ding along, trying to stir up a bit of enthusiasm for
the cause of Christ throughout the state. This is
one of our ways of doing mission work, through the
medium of this paper. We have been compelled to
increase the subscription from fifty cents to one dol-
lar a year, as this paper carries no advertisements
of any sort, in a secular way, and depends on its sub-
scription list to pay its expenses.

Good work is being done by some of the brethren
in the state. Brother Stevens at Crowley has passed
through some strenuous times, but difficulties have
been settled, and all seems serene just now, and good
progress is being reported in the work.

A. Preston Gray, of the King's Highway church in
Shreveport, has resigned, and will soon leave for
other work. He has done a remarkable work in
Shreveport, and leaves a fine field for some other
live wire minister.

Jennings has no regular minister at this time.

The churches in New Orleans are moving along
in very good way.

Cheneyville, headquarters for our publication
work, has now the largest Bible school in the his-
tory of the church. The minister serves as superin-
tendent and teacher of the Adult Bible class, which
is quite a large and wide-awake organization of men
and women. New lights have recently been installed,
and electric fans, and preparations under way for
painting and papering the building inside, as well as
painting the outside. A beautiful lawn around the
building makes it an attractive spot.

The young folks have a live Christian Endeavor,
that meets before the preaching hour each Lord's
Day. Mid-week meetings on Thursday nights well
attended, and a course of Bible study followed.

Brother Clyde Tanner was recently elected as one
of the deacons, and duly ordained, and R. B. Harris

was elected trustee, to complete the Official Board
membership.

A splendid service was recently held on Friday
night at Longleaf, principally for the benefit of some
of our members who live there, and we hope to go
again some time soon.

Our new state organization has not yet been per-
fected for lack of some material that we need to
make it as nearly representative as possible.

The last meeting of the Workers Council was
held at the home of Mrs. R. B. Harris, with more
than 30 ladies present, and a profitable time was en-
joyed by all.

The August meeting of the Workers Council will
be held in the church, and in the evening, when all
members of the church are most cordially invited
and even requested to be present, the first Thurs-
day in August.

Fourteen subscriptions to the Restoration Herald
were recently secured and turned in, and they should
be receiving their papers by this time. This is the
paper on missions, representing the Associated Free
Agencies of the Christian Churches. Some of our
good folks think the World Call is the only mission
paper we have, because their attention has not been
called to the Restoration Herald. Nearly 50 copies
of the Lookout are scattered every week in the com-
munity. Wish more would take the Christian Stan-
dard and some of our other church papers, and keep
up with our own work.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

The Book of Revelation has been given us in the
form of mystic symbols, which makes it a more in-
teresting study than it would be otherwise. This
book has been long before the world, little read
and still less understood, but it will yield much in-
formation to studious Christians.

Let us not forget that this book closes the whole
of divine revelation to man. It came direct to man
from God, through Jesus Christ; indited by the
courts of heaven, and sent to man by the highest
Ambassador and the holiest harbinger ever sent on
a royal mission to foreign shores.

There are two words that may be classed as "key
words" to the book, they are revelation and signified.
Revelation signifies the removal of a veil, something
made known. But, if the book is a mystery, then it
is not a revelation. Surely the greatest Teacher
earth has known, would not have applied this word
to a mystery. He tells us in the closing part of the
book,—"Seal not the saying of the prophecy of this
book, for the time is at hand." Why say this if it is
a closed and impenetrable book of mysteries?

(Concluded on Page 4)

For the Quiet Hour

"Cause of Unhappiness."

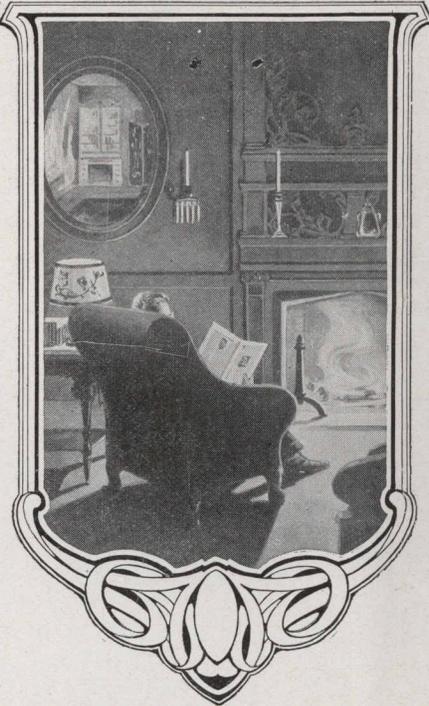
HARSH judgment, rough words, small but frequent acts of selfishness and injustice, sometimes poison the heart that promised to be healthy, and curse the start that promised to be blessed. There are families that possess every earthly comfort—health, money and occupation—but are miserable from the jealousy and quarreling that prevails within them. There are married couples who live in daily sorrow, not because they are in want, but because each thinks the other unkind, arbitrary, and inconsiderate.

Young people sometimes marry with their eyes shut; and thus, instead of being mated with angels, as they foolishly imagined they might be, they find out afterwards that they are only men and women, with the common work-a-day weaknesses and faults of their respective sex. This sham love easily gets soured, and then each reproaches the other for not fulfilling the sentimental prospects with which they entered the marriage state. Take any of the relationships of life, and we find that the greater part of all our sorrow comes from the same cause. Get any one to tell you honestly what gives him the most annoyance and disquietude, and he will tell you they come from want of kindness, sympathy and fellow feeling. He could tell you that he would bear other things if he only met with more consideration, support and encouragement from the people with whom he had to do.

"What Do We Get Out of Religion?"

THE question is often asked, "Why go to church?" When there is so much to do, and when we can worship God at home and in the green fields, or under the trees, or in one's own home? Why go to sit in a pew? Why take the time to worship with others when we can worship alone? Perhaps one reason that such questions are asked is found in the fact that worship has sometimes degenerated to a mere form of ceremonial and has been robbed of the impressiveness of devotion and reverence.

Such questions are usually raised



by those who do not attend church, for those who do attend, either regularly or irregularly, feel the need and know the blessing of such service. God has so constituted the human heart that man has a longing for God. Religious sensibilities, though sometimes they may seem completely buried, are implanted within the very soul of man.

The very fact that we are so busy and that life is so constant in its demands and strenuous in itself is an added reason for the existence of places and occasions of worship. The quiet poise and healthful judgment which results from seasons of reverent thinking will do more than anything else to impress on one life's real meaning and to actuate proper motives and deeds.

"Joy in Service."

IF we follow carefully the life of Jesus, as the gospels describe it, we see the joy with which by the sea of Galilee He gave his message to great assemblies of people and ministered to their needs. We see also the joy in the hearts of those who met him—fishermen leaving their nets, women leaving their cooking, boys taking their lunches and going out that they might hear the Prophet of Galilee. The common people heard him gladly. They would not have followed unless his personality had been winsome and his message uplifting.

"Who Is Guilty?"

ACROSS the nation runs the headline, "The Churches Have Failed to Prevent Crime." But why the churches? If much crime exists today, then homes, schools, fraternities, industrial organizations, the press, chambers of commerce, departments of police, welfare bodies, courts, noon-day clubs, prisons, government—all have likewise failed. Why castigate the churches only?

There are two good reasons. The churches claim much, and everybody expects much. More is expected of the churches as to inspiring virtuous life, than of all the other institutions combined. That fact is interesting and encouraging.

The churches know the way of life, but they have no method for compelling the feet of men to walk therein. They desire none. God has a way for all his children, but untold thousands like their own ways better: "ay, there's the rub." The churches have exhausted all known means to interest these disobedient children in the Father's way, yet when their stubbornness brings them on their city into trouble they turn to curse the churches for failure to break the back of this stubbornness. Who is guilty anyway?

The fact is undeniable that the criminal classes, and those who are generally against organized society are not of our church members. They all belong to that stiff-necked multitude who neglect or scorn the churches, the multitude, to capture which the churches have done all things save compromise truth and the sacredness of each man's power to choose—these would constitute high treason against God.

"Are You Deceiving Yourself?"

IF ANYONE imagines that he is somebody when he is nobody, he is deceiving himself. Let everyone test his own work and then he will have something to boast on his own account, and not in comparison with his neighbour. For every one will have to bear his own load. Each one who is taught should share all the good things of life with those who teach him the word."—Bible.

The Far Away South Sea Islands

By a Missionary From French Oceania



THE Polynesian natives of the Tuamotuan Archipelago in French Oceania are much more industrious and rugged than their brothers who live in the mountainous islands. This is brought about and developed in them through a different environment in which they live. The mountainous islands, which are shaded with profuse tropical vegetation and which are bounteously supplied with spontaneously growing fruits that alternate in their bearing, marvelously provide for their natives' wants. They are also supplied with all the fish they need in the lagoons and open sea just a few paddle strokes from their huts and homes. As a result of this they have grown indolent, and have naturally gravitated towards the things of least resistance. The Tuamotuan natives, however, have been compelled to plant cocoanuts, from the sale of which they obtain money that supplies them with the necessities of life, while their brothers of the mountains are supplied with food almost solely by nature.

The cocoanuts are planted very shallowly without removing the husk, and in some islands they are not wholly covered with dirt when planted. From the time they are planted till the time they commence to bear, four or five years will have passed, and usually six or eight years before they yield their full production of nuts. Many natives permit the nuts to root slightly and the palm to grow from one to two feet before they plant them. Very little care is needed after the planting. The principal work is keeping the large and fast growing tropical brush from smothering them. They never receive cultivation nor care outside of this.

The cocoanuts are picked in two different ways: first, by a very long pole on the end of which is fastened an iron hook by which the nuts are pulled from their crowded clusters; second, and the more primitive of the two methods, is for the native to climb to the top of the tree, where he pulls the nuts from their clusters with his hands. The climbing is accomplished without difficulty with the aid of a cord or rope, which has a loop in each end, and which will reach about half way around the tree. Into these two loops the climber puts his feet. The weight of the body with his feet in these loops tightens the cord or rope around the tree, and then he climbs up, or jumps up frog fashion, with his hands around the body of the tree until he reaches the top. Many, however, now have our modern pole climbers.

The nuts are then gathered in piles and husked by the aid of a sharp pointed stick, or iron bar, that is stuck or driven into the ground at about a fifteen or twenty degree angle with the sharp end up. A little of the fibrous husk is left on the shuck by which two, three, four or more nuts are tied together. Before they are tied together, however, they are broken open with a hammer, an ax, or some other heavy instrument, and the water or milk thrown away. Then they are tied together and hung on poles in a sunny place where they are left to dry. There is a much easier way now than the above method, for today the majority of coconut raisers cut them open with an ax

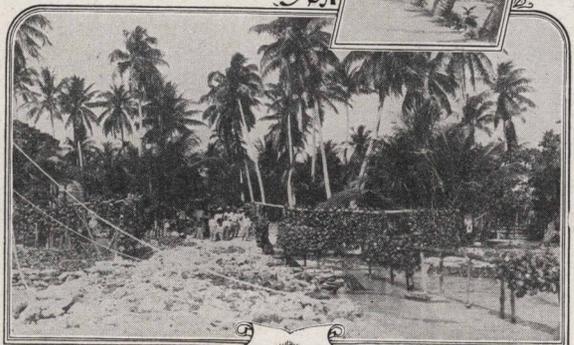
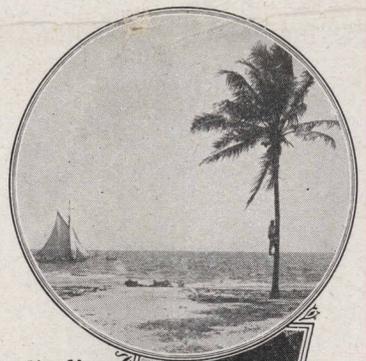
without husking them, and after pouring the water or milk out, they place them face up in the sun to dry. This, of course, necessitates the overturning of each nut every night to prevent the nut from being dampened with the dew. With the approach of rain each nut must also be overturned, and after the rain it is turned back again to the sun. After the nuts have dried two or three days in the sun, they are removed from the shuck by the use of a small pry—a bone, a crooked stick, or an iron. After the nut is pried out of the shuck it is placed on the grass or sand, a mat or upon a rack to dry. Many cocoanut farmers now have large platforms built on wheels that can be run out in the sun, and nights and rainy days run back under a shed. After two or three days more in the sun, the nuts are thoroughly dried, and then they are called “copra,” and this is sold to the traders by the ton, usually bringing from \$30 to \$60.

The copra is taken by small cutter and schooner to the nearest port of call for steamers and large sailing vessels, then freighted to America and Europe, where it is ground and the oil extracted. The oil is used for making butter substitutes, greases, shampoos and many other preparations.

The work of making “copra” is done not alone by the men, but by the women and children as well. In fact, many women well along in years can climb tall cocoanut trees much more spryly than many their junior. To even hint that they could not do so would be an insult to them.

The husks that remain after the copra has been made are often used for fuel, while the shucks are made into charcoal that is used for ironing purposes.

This industry is the main means of a livelihood in these far away islands of the sea and is engaged in by practically every land owner. The average family usually consists of husband, wife and three or four children.



THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

(Concluded from Page 1)

Jesus, while here among men said, speaking of the end, no man knoweth, save the Father only," but He ascended to heaven, sat down at the right hand of the Father, and then these truths were given Him to be passed on to His servants.

He says by way of introduction, that these are things which must "shortly come to pass." This was given to reveal to them the things that were to happen before they came to pass, if not, then there could have been no special reason for the giving of the message.

"And he sent and signified it," this is our second key-word, sign-i-fied. There must be a fixed rule of interpretation. It seems ridiculous that such a book would have been given, without some key with which to unlock its symbols. If algebra had no fixed rules for its characters, if geometry had none for its figures, how could we solve their problems. Every science taught by man formulates its own rules, and its rules are its principles of understanding. Revelation is God's science.

Here are found the rules underlying the interpretation of the Book of Revelation:

There are four main parts to the book—

The Divine Title

Prefatory and Introduction

The Revelation Proper

Explanatory and Exhortatory.

The Revelation proper, God gave to Christ, Christ wholly symbolized it to John, John faithfully wrote it out for the church.

Every symbol used is somewhere in the book explained if we study we may find it.

It is interesting to note the great variety of symbols used in this book; nearly everything in heaven and earth are thus used to enrich these wonderful visions; the Holy Spirit, the angels, heaven, sun, moon, stars, air, light, rainbow, clouds, thunder, lightnings, rain, volcano, rivers, fountains, seas, ships, man, woman, child, birth, death, song, crying, Asia and its cities, synagogue, Jew, church, temple, court, altar, incense, candlesticks, kings, thrones, crowns, a sword, girdle, trumpet, merchants, gold, wine, oil, bread, manna, wheat, barley, hour, day, month, year, balances, dragon, beasts, lamb, dragon, eagle, blood, wormwood, brimstone, fire and water, locusts, heads, horns, wings, a tail, mouth and eyes, all colors. All these are to be considered as symbols, and to be interpreted according to the book itself.

God's Introduction to the Book.

Chapter 1:3—Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand."

The blessings are here pronounced on all those who will hear and keep, hold in loving memory, the things contained in this book. Shall we impeach the wisdom of God by saying there is nothing to it? Or, by saying we cannot understand it? This book is a wonderful faith-tester and faith-developer. If we can believe we are reading a revelation from God to man, the blessing of understanding will follow. "The time is at hand," i.e. the time for the study and understanding of this prophetic book. Prophecy has almost reached its culmination, as it spans the last his-

toric arch of time, reaching really from advent to advent of Christ.

Let us not come to a careful study of the first connected line of prophecy in the book, which is the lesson herein given as a message to the seven churches. Chapter 1:4-10, read it.

He says it is "from Him who is, who was, and who is to come." A description of the eternal nature of the divine Father, as shown by the next clause, AND from Jesus Christ the faithful witness" who, he tells us is "the first begotten from the dead."

"What thou seest write in a book." Why? Unless men may be able to grasp its meaning? John's first royal vision is explained in detail. He is startled by a great voice and looks backward, and sees the seven golden candle sticks, and Christ in the midst of them, and the angel of the Lord then explains—"The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches."

The churches and candlesticks then are identical. A candlestick is something to hold up natural light, while the church is to hold up spiritual light. "Ye are the light of the world." "Let your light so shine, etc." The stars are designed to give reflected light, and are the messengers of ministers of the churches.

"Send it to the seven churches that are in Asia." These are symbols, just as are the other figures we have studied. These were not literal congregations in Asia. Men have searched all over Asia trying to locate exact seat of these churches, and have failed because such was not intended. For, if the Revelation of Jesus Christ was to be given to all his servants, why confine it to a few congregations in Asia? There is just the same symbolic language employed here, as was used in reference to the seven spirits, seven candlesticks, etc. Jesus walks in the midst of the churches of every age and every country, so this must represent seven distinct epochs or ages of the church.

Remembering that all Bible names were given because of its definition, therefore we look to the meaning of these seven names to determine its significance.

It seems simple, when we look at the seven candlesticks, with Christ walking among them, and know that these represented seven ages or epochs in the church, when she walked by star light over her difficult wilderness way to the promised land. Her journeying is over a stretch of time, divided into seven definite periods; the first period is called "Ephesus" which means desirable, and we shall find upon closer study that these names exactly describe seven distinct characteristics of the seven ages in church history, when each one of these ages has had its "present truth" to give to the world.

The number seven is significant, composed of two other important numbers, the heavenly three and the earthly four. Three divine intelligences in heaven, three great lights in the firmament, three heavenly witnesses on earth, spirit, water and blood. Three developing periods in the divine plan for salvation for man—patriarchal, Mosaic, Christian, as seen in the three measures of meal, and the three stages in the growth of corn, three entrances of the

high priest between the four pillars which supported the veil of the Holy of Holies, three gates on each side of the Holy City. Four earthly sides to the city; altars of sacrifice were four square, each had four horns. In nature's analysis are four elements—earth, air, fire, water, four seasons, four winds and four points of the compass, four natural divisions of the word of God, history, prophecy, doctrine and practical. Four witnesses wrote the life of Jesus. Four metals and four beasts represent all earthly kingdoms; four living creatures and four horses are found in the seven sealed book.

There are seven series of seven in the book—7 spirits of God, 7 messages to 7 churches, 7 seals are opened, 7 thunders utter voices, 7 trumpets, 7 heads, 7 plagues.

(To be continued in August)

Mr. Marion Browning,
Cheneyville, La.

Dear Brother Browning:

Having read an account in the May number of the Cheneyville Messenger, concerning the organization of the First Christian Church of which I am the pastor, I thot it best to give you the truth concerning the reason for and just why this church was organized.

On January 9th, 1927, I became the pastor of the Central Church of Christ of this city. I was pastor of this church until July 1st. 1927, at which time the charter committee of which I had been the chairman, brought its report to the Official Board at a regular called meeting to receive the same. This meeting was not a secret meeting but all members had been notified in person and in writing. The Board after hearing the report of the charter committee adopted the same. It was then one week later presented to the congregation, this too was not a secret meeting, and it was not held in my home as stated in the letter written and published in the Messenger, but in the Alumni Hall. The meeting having first been announced from the pulpit of the church.

The charter adopted by the Board and Church asked that the name of the church be changed to the First Christian Church, this was done because there were already two other congregations meeting in our city calling themselves Churches of Christ, and much confusion was caused because of this.

Let me state that in transferring the property of the Church of Christ to the First Christian Church, that we assumed all debts of the old organization. That included \$100 due Brother Chase for services as pastor, and all other outstanding debts up to and including the 1st of July. All these steps were legally made according to the laws of the State of Louisiana, and never in secret.

Let me also state that out of the 100 members received by Brother Raum, five-sixth of them came into the First Christian Church. There are at present 45 or more members in the First Church who were members in the "old organization," many of them had put their money into the two former buildings in the city.

Let me also make this statement concerning why some of the former members of the Central Church are not members of this present organization. One

of the members, a deacon, informed us that, unless we did what the folks that he represented, they: "We will blow the church to hell, some of you will loose your jobs, and your reputations." This being said because the board thought that if there were any in the congregation who wanted to support the United Society should be given that privilege. This they opposed. One church had been destroyed in this city, we did not want to see another go the same way.

Brother Browning this is a true account of the organization of the present First Christian Church as it now exists. We have 135 members in the church at this time. We have a lot on which we hope to build a church in a few more weeks. We are a free church of Christ, not bound to any organization, state or national, while it is true that we support both the Louisiana Christian Missionary Society and the United Society, because they are our only organized societies. We are a united and harmonious organization, doing a real work for the Plea we all love.

This statement is signed by the president of the church. This is a true statement of the conditions as they existed and as they now exist.

Yours sincerely,

I. Boyd Wenger,

Guy E. Wilcox, President of Corporation.

Before me the undersigned authority personally came and appeared I. Boyd Wenger and Guy E. Wilcox, both well known to me, each of whom acknowledged their signatures above and upon oath declared the statements to be true to the best of their knowledge and belief.

M. G. Goff, Notary Public

Dated at Baton Rouge, La.,
this the 24th day of May, 1928.

WHY PROGRESS IS SLOW

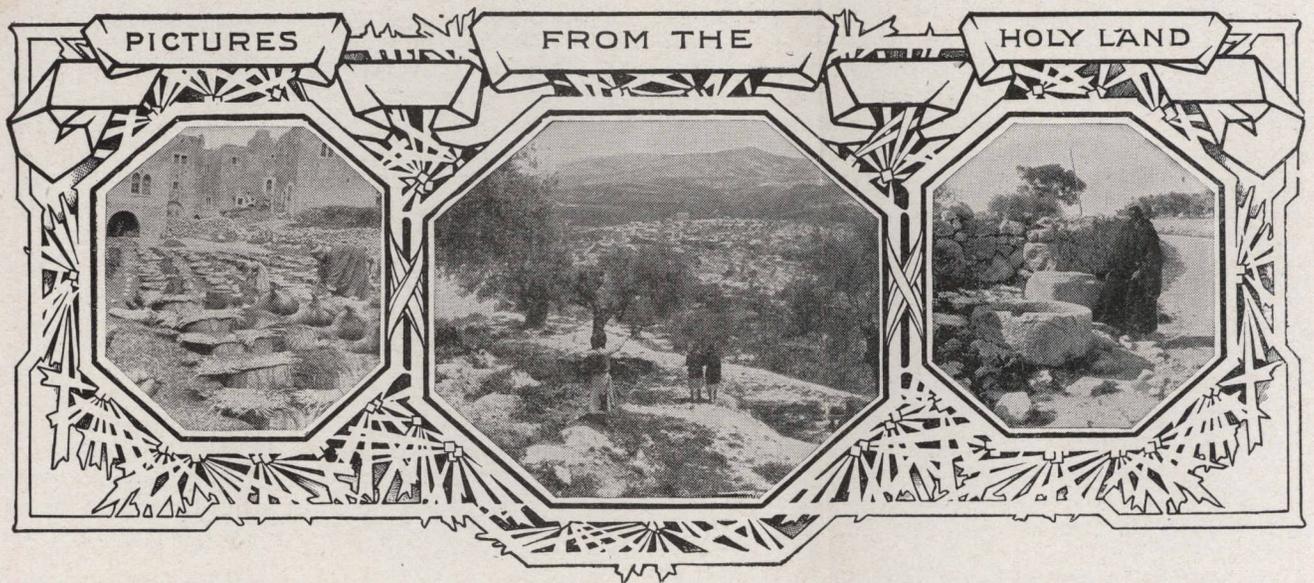
It is not so much the speed with which things are done that counts, but the steadiness. An essential of all kinds of progress is that it be continuous. There must be no standing still. The rate of progress may, for one reason or another, slacken at times, but the movement must always be forward. A man's pace may be comparatively slow, but if he pursues it steadily and with his eyes wide open, he makes more progress than one who rushes along blindly for a time, and, exhausted by his exertions, stumbles frequently and sometimes loses the path altogether. Choose your goal, keep steadily on. Whatever occurs, you will find yourself farther forward than if you had never begun.

Find your fun in what adds to your force.

We ought to be ashamed to remain in ignorance in a land where the blind, the deaf and dumb, and even cripples and invalids manage to obtain a good education. Make a resolution that you are going to be an educated man or woman.

He that is good will infallibly become better, and he that is bad will as certainly become worse; for vice, virtue, and time are three things that never stand still.

The standard bearers of truth are never off duty.



Left to right: A tanner of Hebron preparing goatskins for the carrying of water. Center: The Fields of Ruth and Boaz, looking towards the Mountain of Moat. Right: The Well at Magi. It was at this spot where the Wise Men were attracted by the star while making their way to Bethlehem.

BOTH BETTER AND BIGGER

I CAN still hear a childish voice: "Me help, mamma, me getting bigger." The desire to help, voiced twenty-five years ago, by the tiny tot in her mother's kitchen, was but the forerunner of twenty years given to careful preparation, hours of study, years of training that she might indeed help in life's tasks, instead of being but a space filler.

Childhood and youth are impatient and fretful, when delayed by days of toil and nights of study—but only to him who pays the price of preparation can come the joy of large accomplishment. Only three elements enter into the preparation for a successful life: Heredity, education and environment. We cannot change the first so far as we are concerned. The second will fail unless it is of a satisfactory and adequate character. The third will influence to a certain extent, and its influence will be largely contingent on the other two. The third will also be a continually changing element in influences as the second increases its contribution. We must learn to let education continue to perfect our personalities long after the days of the institutional schooling are over. But youth must also learn to love the days when the institutional schooling is changing character and storing mind and body for future useful activity—must love the process which prepares for the profession to be followed though it delays the beginning of activity. This is a hard lesson for youth to learn.

No education of a preparatory character can be complete unless it cares for all our relationships—our relations to God, to folks, to community, to self. "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." His was a completed education, but it took, humanly speaking, ten times as long to get ready to work as it took to complete the actual enterprise, and no one viewing his life from a purely utilitarian standpoint would dare to question its success.

Tomorrow's tasks, increased by the complexity of an ever changing civilization and an ever widening knowledge of God's ways in nature, will demand a

wider knowledge, a better control, a completer consecration than today's.

We who have tried to do a part of today's task know only too well how lamentably we lacked in adequate accomplishment. We see today's youth impatient to be at it—to do it better—and, thank God for His infinite grace, they will do it better if we can but help them learn that to do better they must be bigger—to be bigger they must patiently, ploddingly, painstakingly make perfect the preparation.

A mind, alert and open, stored with knowledge gained by the travail and toil for others and by lingering long in school and training.

A body, clean and strong to respond to heavy demands, free from the handicaps that result from excesses or pampering or sin.

A spirit, born from above, Christ-like in consecration, winsome and loving, telling the story of a supernatural control more plainly than any spoken words. A divine spirit which no earthly training can give, no worldly school can teach—coming from the school of prayer and fellowship with a personal Christ who changes character.

Such must be the better preparation for the bigger task that will make a changed world and glorify God.

Such a preparation will make the life of the leader tomorrow fit and fine and full—and such leaders so prepared will change environment and make all others better and bigger.

There is an honor in business that is the fine gold of it; that reckons with every man justly; that loves light; that regards kindness and fairness more highly than goods or prices or profits. It becomes a man more than his furnishings or his house. It speaks for him in the heart of everyone. His friendships are serene and secure.—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Lost time is never found again; and what we call time enough, always proves little enough

IF ONLY

"I'll tell you what's the matter with you Christians,"—a high-caste Hindu gentleman was talking with the missionary,—“you are not as good as your Book!”

Rather a startling charge, isn't it? But scrutinize your own life carefully under the light of sacred precept before you venture to deny its truth. If only we were all as good as our Book, what a different place this world would be!

For the Book is powerful. One writer declares that it has dynamite in it, so wonderful is the way in which it speaks to the hearts of men.

Once, when Dr. John Chamberlain had read to the natives of an East Indian city the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans, an intelligent Brahman said to him: “Sir, that chapter was written by one of you missionaries about us Hindus. It describes us exactly.” But we know that those inspired words were written by the apostle Paul almost two thousand years before the first missionary went to India.

A learned Chinese student was employed to translate the New Testament into his native language. At first he worked stolidly, but after a few weeks he came to the missionary greatly agitated.

“What a wonderful Book this is!” he exclaimed
“Why so?” questioned his employer.

“Because,” the Chinese replied, “it tells me so exactly about myself. It knows all that is in me. The One who made this Book must be the One who made me.”

An Armenian patient in a Christian hospital in Turkey was given a copy of the Book, and carried it home with him to his native village. Very proudly he exhibited his new possession, but the priest, when he saw it was a Bible, snatched it from his hand, tore it in pieces, and flung it into the street. There it lay until a grocer, coming by, picked it up to use as wrapping paper in his shop. Thus the poorer villagers took home bits of the Word wrapped around a bit of cheese, a few olives, or a candle. And in this strange way that one Bible was scattered all through the countryside. Soon the grocer's customers began to ask if he had any more leaves. They had read the torn pages, and wanted to know more of the Book. The grocer, of course, knew nothing about the Bible, and could not help them find another. But the leaves were treasured and read over and over again.

A change came into the lives of these simple people as they tried to follow this new Guide. And then one day a missionary colporteur on his round through the Turkish provinces, reached this obscure village. To his great amazement a hundred persons came demanding Bibles or parts of the Bible, when his errand was known. No Christian preacher had been at work, but the scattered leaves had proclaimed their own message of light and life, proving once more the power of God's Word to transform hearts.

If only the scattered words and actions which go to make the volume of our daily living all reflected the Christ, then we would indeed be living epistles, worthy to be “known and read of all men.” O, if we were only as good as our Book, what a different place this world would be!

THE GREAT WORK OF THE CHURCH

THE supreme reason for the existence of the church is that Christ may be made known to the world and accepted and served in the lives of his people. The divinely appointed means for these ends is to be found in the preaching of the word and in the administration of the affairs of the church. For these purposes the church exists and it must never forget nor depart from its high privilege and duty. Absolute loyalty to Christ is the essential qualifying one for the service of God in the church.

There is nothing a faithful minister loves so well as to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. He delights in comforting the people and in presenting to them the high and holy and cheering truths as to the Saviorhood of Christ. He delights in the sacred privilege of presenting Christ to the unsaved and to lead them to accept the salvation that comes to those who believe. He is interested in many subjects. He is constantly reading. He spends considerable in investigating, but nothing so interests him as the simple gospel. The preacher is a shepherd and he should guard the people's minds and hearts.

A preacher is not called upon to defend the Scriptures. It requires no argument to prove that the sun shines. Just open the window and remove the shutters. He is to preach Christ. He is to bear witness to him. Christ is his own testimony. He explains himself. Spurgeon once said in his irresistible way, “We do not defend the lion, we let him loose, and then—oh! my . . .”

And there is nothing the people like better than the simple gospel. That is why we go to church. They are enamored by the winning and pleading utterances that present Christ in his gracious attractions as the Savior of men, the Friend of sinners, the Comforter and Guide of His people. Many subjects can be presented, but Christ must be allowed the foremost place in every discourse. No greater grief can come to Christ or to those who love His cause than to have the great work interfered with by those who disregard the truth of Christ and the peace of the church.

One must think he has a poor reputation for truthfulness when he makes a statement and then asserts it is true and he can prove it.

Keep your courage up and your temper down.



Give not from
the top of your
purse, but from the
bottom of your heart

THE LEANING ATTITUDE.

There are lots of leaners in the world. They are all the while leaning on somebody else. When the prop fails for one cause or another, they are helpless and miserable. It may be that the person on whom they may be leaning moves away or dies or tires of being sapped or suffocated by a clinging vine.

There is a story of a sturdy Scotchman who was a great admirer of Andrew Bonar, under whose ministry he had been converted and often edified. Indeed, his whole spiritual life seemed to depend upon the great preacher.

When Bonar died this man was dazed with grief and wandered in a stunned and helpless manner through the park. It so happened that as he was walking through the park he met a nurse wheeling two children in a little carriage. One of them happened to be lolling against the other and so the nurse said, "Sit up, don't you lean on Andrew Bonar"—one of many children in Glasgow named for the distinguished minister.

But the wanderer through the park, hearing the words, received in them a message from God. He had been leaning upon the preacher and his prop was now gone. Let him lean upon God and he would have a support which will never give way in time or eternity.

A PEOPLE OF PRAYER.

The church was born out of a prayer meeting. Following the ascension, the disciples immediately returned from Mount Olivet to the upper room in Jerusalem and engaged in prayer. This they kept up with one mind and heart until the day of Pentecost when it reached its miraculous climax in the fiery tongues of Peter and the other apostles. And all through the throbbing book of Acts the seraphic flame of prayer burns as if an angel carried a torch through the temple of life seeking the altar where God appears in the golden clouds of incense.

Wonderful things come to pass through prayer. It will cast the spirit of the world out. We can scarcely realize what this means. We are in danger of overemphasizing plans and methods.

A praying church is an electric church. It shocks the careless and negligent into life. It awakens those who are asleep. It becomes charged with divine potentialities.

A praying church is a magnetic church. The glory of the Divine presence shines forth from those who spend much time in prayer. They are like Moses who came from the Mount with the glory of God shining on his face.

A praying church is a courageous church. It feels the stirring of the divine within itself. It burns to conquer the world. Its ambition is to evangelize the races of earth and nothing can stem the tide of its influence.

Henry Ward Beecher once said: "The church is not a gallery for the exhibition of eminent Christians, but a school for the education of imperfect ones."

That mountain in front of you is made to climb, not to cast a shadow in which you can sleep.

One great secret of cheerfulness is in choosing cheerful friends.

The Bubble is as Beautiful as a Crystal—

But it lasts only a moment, while a crystal endures.

Bubbles of pleasure come and are gone. But the joy of a character founded in God lasts through this world into the next.

We can make ourselves what we choose. If you choose Christianity, church going can help to strengthen your life.

BIBLE RULES FOR GIVING

According to Income—

"Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessings of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee."

Without Ostentation—

"But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

Freely—

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give."

With Simplicity—

"Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness."

Regularly, Every Week—

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

Cheerfully—

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver."

THE MAN NEXT TO US.

It is good for us to stop once in a while to consider what the man next to us may think about us.

There are many who are concerned about their general reputation and standing, and those who are more concerned about reputation than they are about character often find it easy to live a double life without general discovery. Such a thing is hardly possible among those with whom we are immediately and constantly associated.

Occasionally we hear one say of another who has passed away, "He was a fine character. I know, because I worked with him." If he is questioned, he will admit that the one of whom he speaks had his peculiarities and defects and shortcomings, but he would invariably insist that the man was good at heart; that his general source of life was the expressions of principles to which he was devoted; that he had a high sense of honor; and that he possessed a reasonable and unselfish spirit.

It is a good plan to examine ourselves occasionally. We will do well to ask ourselves now and then what those with whom we associate think of our life. This will keep us conscious of inconsistencies. It will make our lives more transparent.