

BEGIN AT ONCE.

Begin at once and do whatever your master commands. Begin to practice religion. A child would never learn to walk by a hundred talks about the law of gravitation; it must use its own feet, even at the risk of many a tumble. Wait not for more feeling, or more pungent convictions or for anything that you read of in other peoples experiences. Those are all snares and hindrances, if they keep you from doing at once the very first act that will please Christ. Have you never opened your lips to an unconverted friend, either to avow your own feeling or to do that friend some good? Then try it; you will strengthen yourself, and may bring a blessing to him or her. In short you must begin to obey a new Master; to serve a new Saviour; to strike out a new line of living, and rely on God's almighty help to do it. When you give yourself to Christ in this whole-hearted and practical fashion he will give you a thousand-fold richer gift in return. Yes, he will give you Himself! When you possess Christ you have everything.—*Dr. T. L. Cuyler.*

THE FIRESIDE SAINT.

Doubtless the memory of each one of us will furnish the picture of some member of a family whose very presence seemed to shed happiness; a daughter, perhaps, whose light step even in the distance irradiated every one's countenance. What was the secret of such an one's power? What had she done? Absolutely nothing but radiant smiles, beaming good-humor, the tact of doing what every one wanted, told that she had gotten out of self and learned to think for others; so that, at one time, it showed itself in deprecating the quarrel which lowered brows and raised tones already showed to be impending by sweet words; at another, by smoothing an invalid's pillow; at another, by humoring and softening a father who had returned weary and ill-tempered from the irritating cares of business. None but she saw those things; none but a loving heart could see. That was the secret of her heavenly power.—*The Rev. Frederick Robertson.*

MARK OF A LIVING CHURCH.

No church is in a truly living condition which is not, like the early church, adding to its members such as are being saved. There may be activity, liberality, good attendance at public worship and prayer meetings, and yet if in addition to those there

are not found men and women asking—"what must I do to be saved",—there is need of revival. Where the Holy Spirit is present in power, the deep sense of the importance of spiritual and eternal things will so pervade all the work of the congregation that it will spread to others. A church without convictions, without conversions, without inquirers, without growth from within, may have a name to live but life is feeble.

PRAYER.

The more spiritual the soul is, the more prayerful it will be because it is then the most occupied in heart and desire about the things of God. Our prayers will be few and feeble if our walk with God be of a low character. If we have narrow views of God and His purposes, our prayers will be also narrow and confined. If we are unstable, unbelieving and unspiritual, our prayers may return unanswered. Faith, a good conscience, a large heart, knowledge of the mind and will of God, and a sense of our utter weakness, are the prerequisites of prayer. Not many words are needed—the desires of the Spirit in our hearts, with groanings that cannot be uttered, God will attend to. He that searcheth the heart and knoweth the mind of the Spirit, gives heed to the feeblest cry. It is far more important to consider the condition of our souls, and the truthfulness of our requests, than the mode of utterance or form of speech. In prayer, we have to do with the divine ear, and not with man's.—*Selected.*

The marvellous progress of the Gospel in Japan, which but a few years since was shut against the Gospel, is seen in the following statement:—

"The statistics of all the churches in Japan give the total of organized churches at 193, of which number 64 are self-supporting. The total addition reported in 1886 was 4,629. This makes the membership on the 1st of January, 1887, to be 14,815 (426 were added in January, 1887.) There are 169 theological students, and the total contributions in 1886 were \$26,866."

We have received the report of the Ladies Missionary Society, of Knox Church, Brookfield, Truro Pres. It was organized May 11th, 1887, and has since made excellent progress. The attendance at the monthly meetings has been good and much interest shown. The amount raised by the Society has been divided evenly between Home and Foreign Missions.