

Evangelistic Work Among Heathen Children.

BY MABEL E. ARCHIBALD.

The Sunday School movement—it has been the means of calling into existence the "British and Foreign Bible Society" and "Religious Tract Society," it has stimulated national education and had an uplifting effect upon national character, it has called attention to the value of childhood and enlisted a host of voluntary workers, it has encouraged Bible study and the study of the principles and methods of teaching, and has undoubtedly been no small factor in the upbuilding of the church and in the extension of Christ's Kingdom.

It has its "source in the eternal purposes of God." In the Old Testament times the teaching of the children was regarded as of paramount importance. "Thou shalt teach My Words diligently unto the children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." Jesus himself said: "See that ye despise not one of these little ones." He delighted in their praises, took them up in his arms and blessed them and left the injunction: "If thou lovest me, feed my lambs."

"The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." "Give me the first ten years of a child's life and you may take the rest." "Let me make the school-books of a country and let who will make its laws"—these and other statements which have passed into current thought testify to the fact that all countries were made what they are today by the forces which mould childhood and youth. Meyer asserts that it is ten times easier to lead a child than an adult to Christ and often a child is ten times as fruitful to the kingdom of God. Wanamaker says: "When you save a man or woman you save a unit, but when you save a boy or girl you save a whole multiplication table."

In 1780 Robert Raikes is said to have organized the first Sunday school. To-day the movement has a membership of twenty-five millions. In 1803 Corey's son started the first Sunday school in India. To-day there are 7,000 schools, 12,000 teachers and 300,000 scholars, but what are these? There are so many children in India that if they stood in a line shoulder to shoulder they would encircle the globe! One third of the population of the empire are children under fourteen years of age, while more than seventy millions are between the ages of five and fourteen.

The time may have been when it seemed necessary to establish secular schools in order to incidentally teach the Word of God. It is not so now. The barriers have given way and to-day hundreds of untaught little ones will sit at the teachers' feet and learn the Gospel in story and song. Praise the Lord, the prayers of the first missionaries have been marvellously answered in the open and inviting doors of approach to the childhood of India. The land is before us, it is a good land and full of possibilities, will we go in and possess it?

"Well, I am not so sure" says one. "I fully believe in the work for the children of the Christian community but what is the use of teaching those who live in idolatrous homes?"

For twenty-five years Robert Raikes labored for salvation of the criminal-adult. To try to convert those in whose soul there was no response to the words, "God, Jesus, good" seemed almost a hopeless task. He then turned his attention to the child whose ancestors had never entered a church for the purpose of worship. As a result of three years' botanizing in human nature in a scientific spirit on scientific lines, Raikes declared to the incredulous world: "If good seed be sown in the mind at an early age, as in the natural world, a plentiful harvest may be expected and in the same order. With all his soul he practised and proclaimed: "Sow the seed in the minds of the young; it may please God to cause it to grow up and bear fruit unto eternal life." Is there not, we ask, some parallel in the present conditions of the native child-life and those which existed in England when Raikes turned his attention to the neglected and despised childhood of that land?

Six years ago Mrs. Archibald initiated a special effort for the evangelization of the children of Chicacole. We now have twenty-six Sunday schools or childrens meetings held for an hour each week, on week days as well as Sunday in an appointed place and at a stated time. We are allowed to teach in four Government Day schools and the Municipal Parish school is especially convened each Saturday afternoon for gospel instruction. The lack of time and helpers has prevented the improvement of similar opportunities.

Formerly our regular work was frequently interrupted by the pupils of the various town schools coming for papers. Time would not allow us to say a kind word to each so the word went out: "Come only on Sunday at 2 p. m.; an interesting talk; good music, pretty pictures, come!" At the appointed time from thirty to sixty and sometimes even a hundred boys of various castes smilingly enter. Our table-boy is always on hand to conduct the singing and another young man is prepared to teach lesson. Last year in this and all other schools where the pupils can read we studied the main portions of the gospel of Mark, distributing the books, given by Lord Radstock in memory of Queen Victoria. We give a picture card to only those who can recite so many verses and present the tickets bearing the same.

The Canadian boys and girls kindly supply us with the picture cards published by Harris, Jones and Co., Providence, R. I. These give the best satisfaction as they are in bright colored and uniform in size. It is surprising the number of verses these boys can repeat at the end of the year. Some of them voluntarily write the lesson story and verse in their note books. We have real heart to heart talks with them and a number have expressed their desire to live for the glory of God. They will shoot out their lips in scorn when idolatry is mentioned. The foundations are being laid. Sin and hell, Christ and heaven are no longer meaningless terms. "In the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

The majority of our schools are held under a tree near a rock—in the cleanest place available. These are more difficult to manage as order, punctuality and attendance cannot be depended upon. Sometimes the boys and girls will gather at our approach, at other times it is necessary to go from house to house to call them. As a rule one must be there with the rising sun or in the evening when they return from school or work. These schools are not easily established as the following instance will show. The first day forty came and listened well; the next time they besought us to give them dubs (money); the third time they called out vile names, leaped into the air and gave prolonged hoots; but we went again and again and through the charm of a picture book and the friendship gained by joining in their games we won their confidence and this school is now one of our best.

How are all these schools conducted? Orally, en masse, with all the life possible. Men and women quarrelling, babies crying, dogs barking and various distracting sights and sound will surely be in evidence. Sing about half the time; rhyme a verse; talk about it; explain each word; sing again ask questions continually; show the large colored picture; call upon the brightest boy to tell the story; let another repeat the verse the children in unison saying it after him; sing again then close with a brief simple prayer.

What do we teach? In addition to the hymns and simple texts topically selected we aim to arrange the outline of study so as to cover in a year the fundamental facts and doctrines of our religion. "One says: "It is the glory of the Christian religion that while it stretches beyond the grasp of the mightiest intellect it contracts itself, so to speak within the limits of the narrowest, that while it furnishes matter of inexhaustible speculation it condescends to become the teacher of babes."

The Rev. George Whitman of Buffalo, N. Y., who for several years each Friday afternoon has taught a class of over a hundred boys and girls says: "Theology is not all dry bones; the children have a better digestion for the meat of the Word than most old folks, for their stomachs are not impaired by the dyspepsia of unbelief and irreligious conceit and they show a marvellous adaption and willingness to learn religious truth. The highest spiritual truth may be taught to and understood by the child, if uttered in language with which the child is familiar and illustrated by those things which are on the plane of the child's experience."

We do not find the International Lessons suitable for non-Christian children nor do we think the teaching of a catechism profitable. We aim to dwell upon and to illustrate the attributes of God, the Creator until the children realize that there is no need of the thousand and one lesser deities. It is perhaps unwise to argue about the folly of idol-worship as with the conception of the greatness, goodness and love of God of idol-worship will undoubtedly cease. The soul? "Yes, the dogs' soul and mine are the same," says the Hindu child—hence would explain wherein man differs from all the other works of God. Sin? "To kill an aunt is sin," is the invariable reply—hence the importance of showing the universality, heinousness and consequences of sin and mans' inability to take it away. This leads up to Christ the Saviour and what child would not be thrilled with a vivid account of the life and teachings of our blessed lord! Every lesson should in some way point to the Cross. It is the vision of the cross that will convict of sin. We would lovingly and repeatedly impress the fact: "Jesus loved you and gave himself for you." We would teach the child to be sorry for sin and to tell God so, to now decide for Christ and to take him by simple faith as their personal Saviour.

The secret of Rev. P. E. Hammond's success during the last thirty years in winning thousands of young hearts to God is that he makes much of Christ and his precious blood. He dwells on the two great truths of sin and a Saviour. He prays and labors as if the blessing would descend and boys and girls are alike melted as he tells of Jesus, his great love, his agony, his death and resurrection and they are led to exclaim:—

"Jesus, take this heart of mine,
Make it pure and wholly thine
Thou hast bled and died for me
I will henceforth live for Thee."

(To be continued.)

Sighting the Way.

A certain church worshipping in an old building enlisted its members in the project of erecting a new and beautiful edifice. It also planted a Sunday school some two miles away and in time a church grew and was brought to self-

support with a house of worship of its own. This mother church repeated this four times in a decade and herself grew and prospered. Some of her children are to-day almost as big and handsome as she is. Lay preachers were sent out in the beginning days to each of these new fields and they accomplished great good. A number of missionaries were sustained in foreign fields. The church kept in close touch with them. The great commission to preach the gospel was carried out both at home and abroad. The pastor sighted the way and his people pressed forward in it with enthusiasm and confidence.

We could mention large and influential churches which used to sustain "out-stations" and send out workers, but to-day these missions are either given up or sustained through paid laborers supported by the gifts of a few or by appropriations from the common funds. There are splendid opportunities to start new enterprises not far away from many churches, but there is no moving spirit. Pastors are needed who can sight the way and show their people what to do.

Many are ready to help the poor by giving money to some local charitable organization or by telephoning to some down town store to provide worthy cases with what is needed that money will pay for. But Dorcas made the coats and garments with her own hands, and when her service became known through sympathy with her and her friends "many believed in the Lord."

One reason why more people do not go to church is that this element of personal service is lacking in much of the life of the churches. If these outsiders could feel the collective impulse of doing something for somebody, their interest in religion would revive. Many would be found willing if some leader in whom they had confidence would point out to them definite tasks.

A layman said the other day. "Our pastor has the faculty for doing the work of a hundred men, but he does not possess the ability to get a hundred men to do the work of a hundred men." We know a minister who has that ability and is using it with notable results. For some time he has been wishing for a parish where he might be free from incessant calls to help those in need or to direct others in this service. He has longed for uninterrupted days in his study. Lately the opportunity came. He was invited to the pastorate of a strong church which in many respects met his ideal. But when he faced the necessity for decision, he could not abandon his important and difficult field and his loyal fellow-workers. He has quietly put aside ambitions for scholarship to remain in what seems to him a harder service, but which we believe will bring to him greater rewards in spiritual manhood.

Some business men in our churches are so loaded with business responsibilities that they seem to be unable to do personal service in Christian work. But the minister who is their spiritual leader is doing them positive injustice when he allows them to become so absorbed in business as to exclude that service. They rob themselves and their fellowmen of great blessings. If the pastor finds time to go among the people and to do things for them, the busiest men and women in his church will catch his spirit and follow in his path. No pastor can plead that he is too busy to do this service. Phillips Brooks when he had charge of the great Trinity parish and was called in every direction constantly to make addresses, set a magnificent example in this respect which still has influence.—Congregationalist.

The Lips and the Life.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

Every true Christian, whether in high or humble station, is bound to be a preacher of the gospel. Remember that there are manifold ways of preaching Christ's gospel without choosing a text or addressing a congregation. Wilberforce and Lord Shaftsbury preached God's truth on the floor of the British Parliament; Dr. Wayland, Mark Hopkins and James McCosh from the presidential chairs of a college; William Carvoso, the saintly Methodist class leader, brought hundreds of souls to Christ, and humble John Pounds the shoemaker who baited poor street boys into his shop with a biscuit or a potato, was the founder of "Ragged Schools"; Jacob A. Riis is the orator of the slums; and the sailor, Frank T. Bullen, rings out his message from the fore-castle. Halyburton, when laid aside by illness, made a sick-bed his pulpit. "It is the best one I was ever in," he said; "I am laid here for the very end that I may commend my Lord and Saviour."

A Christ-loving heart is the true ordination after all. "As ye go, preach!" "Let him that heareth say, Come!"—these are the heavenly commissions to every one who has felt the love of Jesus in his or her soul, knowing the gospel fixes at once the obligation to make it known to others. If I have drunk from the well of salvation I am bound to call out, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" God has a vast variety of pulpits for his servants to preach from. Yours my friend, may be in a Sabbath-school teacher's seat, or in the nursery, or a mother's arm-chair, or it may be a work-bench, or in a counting-room. You may preach by a Bible or a tract or a loaf of bread on a poor man's table, or by an earnest talk in a mission school or a faithful pleading with an impenitent soul,—any way that will