The Model Home Missionary.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"Who went about doing good."—Acts 10:38.

I shall now pass on to notice, in the second place, THE MODEL HOME MISSIONARY.

My brethren, after all, the success of a work depends very little upon the system which is adopted in carrying it out; almost everything rests, under God, upon the man. There have been men who, with systems unwise and imperfect, have nevertheless accomplished noble results, while others with admirable organizations have done nothing, because they were not the right men. Who then is the fittest man to be a missionary for Christ? Who is the woman that can best serve her God? Behold the Model Missionary in the person of the Lord Jesus. The man who is to serve God as a leading missionary *must be a man of teaching power and of personal influence.* It is of no use to send out as a missionary a man who cannot speak; and yet there are many places where the people are without a minister, if speaking power be an essential qualification for that office. Why, you may frequently hear the preacher mumble so dreadfully that you can hardly follow his words, or he is a mere reader, or else a prosy reciter of very heavy matter. In the Established Church, the very last thing that is looked into when a young man enters holy orders, as they call them, is whether he has gifts of utterance, or in other words, whether he is qualified by nature and by grace to be a preacher. That some very admirable and excellent persons enter the church is cheerfully granted; but none the less we believe such a system to be essentially bad. If you want a man to spread the gospel among his fellow-men, he must be one who can preach. He must be apt to teach. He must have a way of making plain what he means, and of winning attention, so that men may be willing to listen to him. Our Lord has this grand capacity in the highest degree. He could bring the sublimest truths down to the level of His hearers' comprehension. He knew how, with a divine simplicity, to tell a story that would win even a child's attention; and though the truth He spake was such that archangels might well marvel at it, yet He put it into such a form that the little children gathered around Him, and the common people heard Him gladly. Aptness to teach—this is what we want. Pray ye, my brethren, the Lord of the harvest to send us many who have this choice gift. The pulpit, the Sunday-school, and every form of Christian service need earnest workers who have the power of translating their thoughts into the language of those with whom they come in contact, so that they may be interested and impressed.

But there were higher qualifications than these. *Our Lord as Missionary was a man who fraternized with the people.* I do not think He ever passed a person on the road concerning whom He said to Himself, "I am so much above that man that I will not speak to him." I could hardly dare to imagine Him saying such words. It would so lower the Saviour to imagine such a thing; and yet and yet and yet, some of His ministers have thought so! How many of us if we had seen a poor harlot coming to the well would have remained sitting by it purposely to converse with her? If we had seen her coming, knowing her character, we should probably have moved off, and have eased our conscience, with the notion that hers was a case more suitable for some one else to deal with, in fact, a matter to be left to the agent of the Rescue Society. Our Lord made no affectation of condescending or of patronizing the poor Samaritan sinner; but as naturally as possible, with every appearance of ease, He at once began to talk with her. If she had been the noblest lady in the land, He could not have fraternized more thoroughly with her, and yet He in no way connived at her sin. Our Lord received sinners and ate with them. They must have seen how different He was from themselves; but He affected no distance, He pretended to no caste, He drew no lines of social demarcation. He was not a Pharisee who stood apart in His pious eminence; pride and assumed dignity had no attractions for Him. He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, in the highest and best of senses; but in other respects He was the friend of publicans and sinners. If we are to have London blessed, it will never be by ministers who are too great to speak to the poorest of the people; nor will your benevolent societies work much good if your lordships and ladyships cannot mingle with the humbler classes. We must be one with those whom we would bless; we must not be ashamed to call them brethren; we must without being conscious of stooping, reach out a fraternal hand to the fallen and degraded; that we may lift them up for Christ's sake. Oh, for men and women of the true brotherly and sisterly spirit; bone of the people's bone and flesh of their flesh!

Our Lord, again, was a *man who could toil.*—He was by no means a gentleman at large, amusing His leisure with lecturing. He never preached a sermon without weaving His soul into it. He was by no means the kind of evangelistic who finds his task a light one. He could not as some do, preach by the year without disturbing the placid current of His own emotions. Nay, my brethren, never preacher worked more intensely than Jesus did—by day preaching, by night praying, oftentimes faint through weariness, and yet not finding time so much as to eat bread. Whoever did not labor, Christ did. He is the Master worker of all the sons of men. If we all must needs eat bread in the sweat of our faces, much greater was His toil when He brought the bread of life to us by the bloody sweat of Gethsemane, and by the life-sweat of every day of His three years' ministry. His life was a scene of unrivalled labor. We can hardly conceive how thoroughly our Redeemer laid Himself out for us. Now, if the church would see souls saved, the work will never be achieved by agents who are half asleep; Christ's kingdom will never be extended by persons who are afraid of labour. God will bless His church by the power of the Holy Spirit, for all the power lies there; but He will have His church travail, or the blessing will not come.

For a home missionary, we want a *man who can pray as the Master prayed.* What a proficient in the art of prayer was Jesus! He was as great with God in prayer as He was with man in preaching. I heard a brother speak the other day of our Lord's coming from the mountain-side with the wild flowers on His garments, and the smell of the heather on His vesture, for He came fresh from the lone spot where He had spent the night in prayer. Ah! my brethren, here is the centre of power. Prayer breaks hearts. These granite rocks will never yield to our hammers till we go down on our knees to smite. If we prevail with God for men, we shall prevail with men for God. The main work of the minister must be done alone. Let him do as he pleases when the multitude are listening, he shall not bring them to Christ unless he has pleaded for them when none heard him but his God. Our home mission wants men who can pray.

And, brethren, if we are to secure useful men and women, *we must choose those who can weep.* That is a fine faculty, that emotional power of the heart which makes the passions boil, and rise within like steaming vapors, till at last like the waters of dropping wells, they are condensed and fall in showers from our eyes! I do not covet that moistness of the eye, which some exhibit as the result of optical weakness or effeminacy of constitution; but manly weeping is a mighty thing. Our Lord Jesus was thoroughly a man; far too masculine to fall into sentimentalism and affectation; but when He beheld the city, and knew all the sufferings that would come upon it from the siege as a punishment for its sin, He could not restrain the waterfloods, His great soul ran over at His eyes. If He had not been a man who could weep Himself, He could not, humanly speaking, have made others weep. You must feel yourselves if you would make other men feel. You cannot reach my heart till first of all your heart comes to meet mine. Lord, send into Thy field men of strong emotional natures whose eyes can be fountains of tears.

To crown all, *our blessed Lord was one who knew how to die!* Oh, when shall we have men and women sent among us who are prepared to die, in order to accomplish their life work? I have shuddered, and all the more so because I might do no better myself, when I have heard excuses for avoiding risks of life, and reasons for escaping hardships in foreign lands. It has been even questioned in some quarters, whether a man would be right in exposing himself to danger of life in order to preach the gospel. I could say much, but would be sparing of censure. Only this I must say, until grace shall restore to us the ancient, apostolic self-sacrifice, we may not expect to see the gospel conquering to any high degree. Zeal for God's house must eat us up; love of life must yield to love of souls; trials must be counted as nothing for Christ's sake, and death must be defied, or we shall never capture the world for Jesus. They who wear soft raiment will never win Ireland, or Africa, or India, for Christ. The man who considers himself, and makes provision for the flesh, will do little or nothing. Christ revealed the great secret when it was said of Him, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." In proportion as a man saves himself he cannot save others, and only in proportion as he is carried away with self-sacrifice, willing to renounce luxuries, comforts, necessities, and even life itself, only in that proportion will he succeed. I trust that no missionary's life may be lost; but I trust that if the church can only bring the world to Christ by the death of her ministers, all our-lives may be sacrificed; for what are we, my brethren, what is any of us, compared with the accomplishment of our Redeemer's work? Our sires went to the stake with songs upon their lips. Our ancestors were confessors who dared the barbarous cruelties of Northern hordes, and the refined superstitions of Southern superstition; men who could die, but could not refrain from witnessing for the Lord. We must quit ourselves like men for Christ, and though we may not all be called to make the extreme sacrifice, we must be ready for it, and if we shrink from it we are not the men for such a time as this.

We want men who can toil, men who can pray, men who can weep, men who can die. In fact, we need for Christ's work men all ablaze with consecrated fervor, men under a divine impulse, like arrows shot from the bow of the Almighty flashing straight to the target; men like thunderbolts launched by the Eternal to go crashing through every difficulty with irresistible energy of aim. We want a divine enthusiasm to fire us, an Almighty impetus to urge us on. Only men thus filled with the Holy Ghost shall accomplish largely the work of God.

My last point was to be, if Christ lived thus, and worked thus, LET US HEAR HIS CALL AND IMITATE HIM.

I shall say but a few sentences, but let them be remembered. Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is your privilege to be a worker together with God, therefore *keep close to the footsteps of the great Master worker.* Remember that *before He went to work He was Himself personally obedient to that gospel which He had to preach.* He did not bid others believe and be baptized, and neglect to be baptized himself. "Thus it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness," said He, and in the waves of Jordan the Baptist immersed Him. How little will you be fitted for service, if you leave any command of Christ unobeyed! How can you exhort others to do your Lord's will, if you yourself are disobedient to it? The first thing therefore, before you go to that form of service which now invites you, is to see to it that you have obeyed the Master's will, for "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

This being done, let me say to you, *Is there not some department of mission work at home that you could undertake?* Most probably, you could not do all those things which I have mentioned as having been done by Christ; but you know that young artists will often be instructed by their masters to sketch, not the whole of a great statue by Phidias, but a single limb, an arm, a hand, or a foot. Have you not often seen in the artist's studio the foot of some great masterpiece used as a model? Just so it shall be enough to teach you service if, being unable to attempt the whole of the great scheme which I have brought before you now, you will undertake zealously to labor in one department of it. But whatever you do, do it thoroughly, do it heartily. If it be worth doing at all, it is worth doing well; for such a Master, there must be no second-rate work, and with such a gracious reward before you, there must be no offering of that which costs you nothing. You must throw yourselves into whatever you undertake for Jesus.

Will you now take one word, which is often used by Mark, as a motto for yourselves? The idiom of the Gospel of Mark is *eutheos*, "straightway." He is always saying of Christ, that straightway He did this, and straightway He did that. Now, if you have work for Christ before your eye, straightway hasten to it. The most of Christians miss the honor they might have in service by waiting till a more convenient season. Do something to-night, before you go to bed, if it be only the giving away of a tract. Do something as each moment flies. If hitherto you have not been a worker, begin *now*; or if you have been a worker up till now, do not pause, but end the evening with another good word to sister, or child, or friend. Evermore breathe out consecration to Christ.

And let me bid you, dear friends, if you love my Lord and Master, to have comfort in trying to serve Him, because *there is an all-sufficient power which you may obtain for this service.* Our Lord is declared in this very verse to be One who was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power. That same Holy Ghost is given to the church, and that same power lingers in the assemblies of the faithful. Ask for this anointing, and pray that as in this verse we are told that God was with Jesus, so God may be with you. Remember last Sunday evening's text: "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." Being now a pardoned sinner, ask to be an anointed saint. As one who is reconciled to God, ask that you may be strengthened by God, so that from this day forward you may serve your Master mightily.

I do not know that I ever felt happier in my life than I did last Tuesday night when I was listening to my dear friend, Mr. Orsman, the pastor of the poor but gracious church in Golden Lane, in the city. He is a good brother, who, some years ago, was converted to God under our ministry, and he was there and then converted all over. Some of you, when you believe in Christ, appear to have only a sprinkling conversion; but I love those men and women who get an immersion conversion, go down into the deeps of the love of Christ, and give themselves altogether up to their Lord. Why, that dear man, though working all day long in the post-office, yet finds in the evening opportunity to preach Christ; and if you were to go to Golden Lane, you would find there all the forms of organization which I have described at the commencement of this sermon in active exercise. Among the poorest, lowest and most degraded of the people, grace has found out precious jewels. Some seven or eight who are now ministers of the gospel, first began to preach to his poor people there. He has now spiritual children scattered all over the world by emigration, and the good man having consecrated himself fully to his work, is most happy in it. I believe from the bottom of my soul that these single-handed men, who give themselves up to a special district, and work it well, are the very greatest blessings that London can have, and if there is a young man here, endowed with abilities, and perhaps with a little money and time, what better could I propose to him, as a lover of Christ, than to begin some such work for the Master? The same applies to Christian women. Oh, what good Christian women can do! There are those in this place whose names, if I were to mention them, would be had in honor by us all for what they have accomplished. Without obtruding themselves as preachers into public assemblies, they are working away for Christ privately, and bringing many into the church of God. O Christian men and women, time is flying, men are dying, hell is filling, Christ is waiting to see of the travail of His soul. I beseech you by the bowels of God's mercy, by the heart of Christ, by His love for souls, bestir yourselves and proclaim salvation. May the Lord's blessing be with you. Amen.

The Unrestful Spirit.

Bishop Huntington has truly said: "The mind wants steadying and setting right many times a day. It resembles a compass placed on a rickety table; the least stir of the table makes the needle turn around and point untrue. Let it settle, then, till it points aright. Be perfectly silent for a few moments, thinking of Jesus; there is almost a divine force in silence. Drop the thing that worries, that excites, that interests, that thwarts you; let it fall like a sediment to the bottom, until the soul is no longer turbid, and say secretly: 'Grant, I beseech Thee, merciful Lord, to Thy faithful servant pardon and peace, that I may be cleansed from all my sins and serve Thee with a quiet mind.'"

How does it come to pass that few persons are to be found to whom the above advice is not deemed applicable? We may, indeed, affirm that there are none living on the earth who are not liable to just such unrest. Why is this? Why are not all Christians so firm and so strong that nothing is able to disturb their peace?

Let us find even amid such questionings one comforting answer. It is this: We are all in a world that tests us at every point. It is no evidence that our hearts are astray because trials are upon us, or because in the time of these trials there is a secret tremulousness of soul. While in the flesh the conditions of material existence are constantly present with us. No one knows this so thoroughly as our elder Brother, who when upon earth "was tempted in all points like as we are."

But there is another answer to be given to the question: "Why is my peace ever disturbed?" A uniform peace, an unbroken rest of soul, may not always be the safest experience. The sagacity of our great enemy is often employed in originating a false confidence. The hours of undisturbed quiet are the very seasons in which he plots our ruin. Then he sees we are not crying unto the Lord, not hiding in the cleft of the rock, not armed and alert to resist his temptations. It is comparatively easy for him then to find entrance. He would carefully conceal from us all danger, that he may successfully revive some old remnant of pride and vanity.

It is not safe to say that secret sin has been so fully cleansed by the precious blood, that we are no more in danger of such solicitations from the evil one. Granting all that may be claimed possible, through the sin-killing power of atoning merit, the soul has still need of guarding all the secret approaches to its interior being. Not one avenue may be safely left exposed; not one door may be left ajar. Always, for all God's children, the price of final victory is intelligent, prayerful vigilance.

Such watchfulness is not likely to be perfect in a soul that knows nothing but unruffled quiet. In an unguarded moment some mental characteristic may be discovered by our adversary, and the golden opportunity then suited to capture the soul for himself! Yes, there is positive insecurity when there is long-continued cessation of inward hostilities.

But, then, is the soul never to find rest in this life? Certainly, if the living now that abideth forever is to be accepted. In what does this rest consist? In finding, amidst all the secret vibrations of the soul, an answer of peace from Him who hath said: "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." The occasions for coming to Him to find this rest will be frequent in every case. These occasions will be daily seen if we remember that we are still in a world of fiery trial, and are still constantly exposed to satanic assault.

How blessed is this rest when found in Him! All the more blessed, we may say it is, after the necessary interval of struggle and heart-searching—after the divine method of leading us close to our Saviour's side has been fulfilled. For it will be true of all devout minds, so long as we sojourn in the flesh, "now for a little while if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold temptations." (Revised Edition.)

How blessed will that rest be which cometh after the crosses and losses of this life! "Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Revised Edition.)

True Story from Mission-work in West London.

A few weeks since, Mr. Pearse was making some purchases in a shop, when a lady, who knew him by sight, asked him if one of the Sisters would call on a young married lady living in some artisans' dwellings in Bloomsbury. She said that she was dying of consumption, and that she would be very grateful if any one called on her. Mr. Pearse wrote at once to me, and I went immediately. When I entered the room I saw one of the prettiest and one of the saddest sights I have ever seen. The room itself was spotlessly clean, the walls were covered with beautiful etchings; above the fire-place was an over-mantel crowded with choice ornaments, old china in Worcester and Sevres ware, and bric-a-brac of all kinds. In one corner of the room a Crown Derby *tete-a-tete* tea service, and on every hand indications of refinement and culture. In an easy-chair by the fire sat a most lovely girl, only twenty-two years old, but in the very last stage of consumption. When I entered she greeted me with a charming smile, and said, "Are you come to stay with me? It is kind of you. May I go to sleep?" I had scarcely answered in the affirmative before she fell back and was fast asleep.

For nearly an hour I sat by her side, wondering what could be the strange life-history of one so situated, and how anyone with such a perfectly trained taste and with so many mementoes of brighter and happier days could have come to such a pass as this. Then she opened her eyes and looked up at me with a look of satisfied wonderment and said: "Are you really here?" "Yes," I said; "I promised not to leave you." "Yes," she replied; "but many come here and promise they will not leave me, and when I have dropped off they creep out of the room, and when I wake they have gone; and though I am so tired and so sleepy, I dare not go to sleep, for," she added, piteously, "I am afraid that I shall never wake again, and I am frightened of death." Then I spoke to her of the love of God, and told her how that He had promised never to leave us.

And now she began to tell me her life-history. Her mother was a lady of title; her father a member of the nobility, died when she was very young. She had been brought up with every possible comfort and indulgence which a loving parent could bestow upon an only child. When eighteen years old her husband, belonging to the same class of society as herself, had taken her from this lovely home. They were very happy at first. The first year of their married life was full of gladness, but drink and gambling had enslaved him. She had no hard words for one whom she still loved; but it was impossible to tell the story of her life without showing how terribly he had been led away by these two fearful sins. The road to ruin had proved to be a steep and easy decline; the splendid home which they first dwelt in had been sold, and a humbler home was theirs only for a short time; then again this had to be left for a still more humble home, and so on, step by step, until they had come to reside in this one room in a block of artisans' dwellings. She knew that her's had been a wasted life. It was difficult, if not needless, to speak to her, in her weakness and disappointment, of God's claims. I felt that what she wanted was to realize His love and to rejoice in the peace which comes from the knowledge of His goodness. She told me that a clergyman had visited her and read to her out of a book, but she said: "It all seemed such a long way off." "I am afraid of God," she kept crying, "and I am so afraid to die; they told me you knew all about Him, and would help me." Then I did my best to reveal to her the love of Christ, as I knew it. I prayed with her, and to some extent she was comforted, but she was not satisfied, and the time had come for me to go.

The next day I went again early, and she seemed so glad to see me. We talked on and on about the infinite mercy of our loving Saviour, and the light seemed gradually to be breaking. It was my class night, and seven o'clock had come. I spoke to her again about the simplicity of trusting Jesus and, accepting Him as a Saviour, and then I knelt down beside her bed and prayed that God would reveal Himself to her as He had revealed Himself to me. As we prayed the presence of God rested upon us, and when my prayer was finished she took hold of my hand, drew me down to her and said: "How can I ever thank you? I see it all now; I am not afraid to die. Let me kiss you." I had promised to call the next day at noon and stay until ten at night, but I was not needed. At two o'clock on the morning following our interview she reached the end of the "valley of the shadow of death," in which she had learned to "fear no evil," because God was with her. The life which about forty-eight hours earlier seemed as though it would close in darkness and despair ended in exceeding peace, and when the morning came a messenger brought me the glad news that this poor girl had left the trials and difficulties of this life, and had passed away in sure and certain hope of a blessed immortality.—*Sister Lily, in the Advance.*

Conceit.

"Be not wise in your own conceits." (Rom. 12:16). Translated into very plain language, the text means: Don't think you know everything. The text bids us not to be so foolish as to think we can monopolize wisdom. We make our blunder when we think common sense can be handled like some material commodity.

A "corner" in the wheat market may be possible, but a corner in thoughts and opinions is a very different thing. "We four" may control the cattle market, but common sense does not gather itself up quite so easily into a great sacred trust.

Don't act as if you knew it all. You will carry your head too high. You will be too intolerant and overbearing. It will be too hard to affiliate or fellowship with you in anything. Wisdom does not run in ruts, nor does she often travel over the narrow gauge.

Don't get up in a business meeting of the church fully persuaded that only your favorite measure has merit. If this isn't adopted, perhaps the church will survive. Your measure may be right; it may be wrong. If it be right, the average common sense of the church will probably recognize the fact. If it be wrong, it would be an unfortunate thing that you should be the only one to perceive this.

Conceit often fastens to a single phase of truth. The opinionated champion of reform sees only the need of the hour. The cause, as he sees it, fills all the horizon of his thought. He wonders why others do not fall into line with him.

"Why don't they adopt my methods?" he asks. Their methods to him seem utterly inadequate. He allows himself to antagonize and be antagonized. Ere he knows it he is treating as foes those who in some other way are working toward the same great end with himself.

The world frowns on conceit. The gospel has no place for it. The man who thinks he knows it all may be called anything but wise. To know what one does not know is just as important as to know what one does know. And ever to bear in mind that another may know what I do not—may be right while I am wrong—is a concession which, if frankly made and humbly acted upon, may be a means of grace to every one of us.—*Rev. E. E. Rogers.*

Lesson from the Spring.

Can man produce a spring by artificial appliances? Can he send throughout nature, by means of furnace fires, or steam-pipes, the thrill of life which bids the kingdom of plants leap into being and beauty? No! Man may make a hot-house, but he cannot cause a spring-time. He may cultivate his little beds of flowers and banks of tropical plants within the narrow confines of steam-heated rooms covered with glazed roofs, and give our winter months a taste of artificial greenery; he may force sweet flowers and beautiful flowers from which all fragrance has been cultured to grow in pots and yield untimely blossoms in the very face of winter snows. But what a small thing is that compared with those mighty and mysterious results which are wrought everywhere around us in the spring. Who can fill the mountains with the glory of the greening forests? Who can cover the valleys with verdant grasses, and dot them with the bright eyes of countless wild flowers? Who can array innumerable orchards with white blossoms of cherry-trees and pink blossoms of peach and apple? Who can send the currents of vitalizing heat through the hearts of the hills, and push out upon the dog-woods their great white blossoms; sprinkle the meadows with violets and daisies, trail the sweet arbutus along the fields and skirts of woods, and fill the air over sunny slopes with that fragrance of blossoming vines which was so sweet to Solomon in the spring days of Palestine? Ah! who can do this but that omnipotent force in nature whom men call God? Yes, man may make a hot-house, but God alone can make a spring.

How true is the metaphor when we pass with it into the spiritual realm! There are no human forces that can cause a change of heart. Civilization, art, culture, science—these may indeed clothe a life with outward semblance of beauty; but if one would penetrate the soul to its utmost depths with unregenerative forces; if one would permeate society through all its length and breadth with the power of spiritual life and salvation, he must call upon God, who alone is able to do this for man and for society. Let us then look reverently up to Him as the author of every good and perfect gift. "It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." "Which are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God."—*Henry C. M'Cook, D. D.*

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