

EDITORIAL

A Praying Folk

The Church of to-day and of to-morrow will be mighty only as we become a praying folk. This is the force that moves the heart of God. His infinitely tender spirit is responsive to the faintest whisper of the soul. How simple, yet how divinely potential, the act by which we lift up our eyes to the hill of the Lord whence cometh all our help! Nor are we to be respected according to rhetorical finish—the mere symmetry and eloquence of a period. Prayer is not a rounded sentence—sentimental gush—that proves to be only a paltry appeal for earthly, selfish praise. We are not delivering prayers; the truth is, our prayers are delivering us. God heareth prayer, and that of the righteous man availeth much. What a wondrous inspiration! For the simple asking, and based on actual need, all the resources of an infinite world lie at our feet. God holds the wealth of worlds in His hands only that He may lavish it upon a praying universe. The only boundary to faith is that we do not make it conditional. The only limitation to prayer is that it springs from some conscious want. To every child of grace the presence of prayer is a pure credential, since

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Beware of Books!

Of course, not all. I only mean a part of that vast stream pouring from the modern press. Authors, in this age, are so much like comets—they blaze up and then pass out of view. The going is as sudden as the coming. They often eclipse each other. This is an era of commercialism and of distorted vision. To be a lion of the literary world you must know how to sweep one of these chords. Some of the most subtle and insinuating suggestions are made under the guise of truth. They pass current as bearing the mint-mark of heaven. Sensuality mars pages of brilliant thought and intense, almost uncontrollable imagination. The fountain of our thought and feeling has been poisoned. It must at last bring us untold evil. Why don't we tag them? Their names are legion and their deeds are damning. Of the making of books there seems to be no end. They pour from the press like grist from the mill. And the high-sounding names—not worth the paper they are printed on. Only those of low taste will pander and eulogize the book. They are the paid henchmen of those who would more deeply infect our taste for the wares of the scandal-monger and the literary huckster. But that's not the end of it! This literature draws others to the detestable feast. They taint every mind they touch. The very witchery of the sordid stories wins thousands. They seduce and lead all who would have erstwhile been pure.

That Unfilled Niche

We must be sensible that God has called us to a certain, definite field. Everyone of us to his place and at his work will bring prosperous times in Zion. You can never be an exception to the rule; everybody has the gift of personality. Your character—good, bad, or indifferent—has its given force. The age so much needs a deepening of the inward consciousness that this latent power must be utilized. There is no use to deny that you are sensible of a given field of operation. A negative character has no place in the Church. We can get into the habit of doing something—and we can

get out of it. Let's build mightily for the future. We so greatly need one big, tremendous driving thought. That is, the responsibilities of our fathers will sooner or later fall on us. Are we ready? Had you ever thought of the inseparable connection between spirituality and that charity about which St. Paul wrote the Church at Corinth? The latter is the former in a tangible, more appreciative form. Charity is incarnate spirituality. It is crystallized immortality, for "we are remembered by what we have done." It is pregnant with the force that plays so great a part at the Judgment Bar: for "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." George Eliot, that sweet Warwick singer, wrote "The Choir Invisible," on the basis of this very doctrine. Would that we could catch the inspiration, as with her we sing:—

O may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
Of miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues!

Thoroughness in the Epworth League

Why not? We believe in being thorough in almost everything, and often repeat the wise old saying that "what is worth doing at all is worth doing well"; yet in many League matters of procedure there is too often an indifferent spirit shown. Be business-like in conducting your League affairs. We are constrained to give this piece of advice because of several enquiries we have recently received. If, for instance, all our Leagues used the Secretary's Record book, prepared by the General Secretary and sold by the Book Room, there would be much less confusion than now exists in keeping the Roll complete, in preserving the Minutes of the Business meetings, and indeed in all other matters of League records, which in the majority of cases seem to be kept, if kept at all, in a very loose state. Secretaries! Be thorough!

The Executive of the Toronto Conference Epworth League has done a good thing in this regard, too, in sending to every League President in the Toronto Conference, a copy of the Constitution. The President found, what many others have known for some time, that the local Leagues are not, for the most part, working according to the Constitution. He believes, and rightly so, that no League can do best work that runs its affairs in its own free and easy style; and to bring the attention of the Presidents to this important matter, the copy of the Constitution and an advisory letter regarding the same have been mailed to each local head officer. The substance of Mr. Tressider's timely appeal is simply, "Presidents! Be thorough!" The same idea prevailing all along the line of offices and demonstrated in every phase of League work will do more to ensure success than anything else, for without thoroughness failure is sure. Whatever your position, therefore, "Be thorough!"

This Awful Haste

We have reached the breakneck speed. The mad race of the lightning express seems to inspire us. Frenzied rush infatuates and impels. Why can't we take things more leisurely? We simply snatch at the minutes. Each stamps its image as the other flies. Under high pressure, the movement is feverish and exciting. A voice that dwells in the unspeakable serenity whispers—it is drowned by the roar and the tumult, and we do not hear. We're in such a hurry—no time to meditate, no time for sweet communion. Oh! that we could take time to look into the face of higher things—it transfixes, it transfigures, it transforms!