

Contributions.

Kindness

R. J. BYRON THORN.

How small a thing it is to do, And yet 'tis done by very few, To give a kindly word or look, Or do a kindly deed and brook A little pain, if needs must be, To let our fellow man go free!

Had man no selfish wish or aim, Could he, when rising high in fame, Not lose his head, remember still He's man and should control his will, And not forget his fellow-man, Keep kindness ever in his van?

Alas! the dizzy heights of fame Too often cause that 'e'en the name Of dearest friends of early date Dull leave the minds of men of state, Whom Fortune favored and they rose; For self they think, and kindness goes.

And as the dazzling, sunny rays— When skies are clear, as on the days Of June—delights all nature's cheek, So kindly words the heart do seek, And fill it full of joy and peace, And cause all grievous passions cease.

What ails the Missions.

We may well ask ourselves and one another that question, for I think it is very apparent to everyone that something very serious is wrong with the missions. I was very much impressed with this thought after reading the report of the Allegheny Convention; for although on one hand it was very cheering to read of the progress the good work was making, and very encouraging to think that there was a gradual increase in the mission fund, still it was a little disheartening to think that in that land of almost boundless wealth, where that \$100,000 has so long been asked for, and could be raised by each Disciple giving the exceedingly small sum of seventeen

cents, that only one out of every ten raise much more than the half of it. It makes us pause and consider.

And we in Canada are no better, for we have to be reminded and reminded of our duty to pay in our pledges and try to do a little more for the mission cause. And so we do laggingly, out of cold unlovely duty, what we should consider our highest privilege and greatest happiness to do. How strange it is that we part so grudgingly with a little of our means to further the cause of Him who did so much for us, even to the giving up of His life!

And now I would like to have a plain, practical, matter-of-fact talk with the women, for I believe that in their hands lies the future success of the Home and Foreign Missions. And I suppose you will nearly all say now, "Why, how much more can we do than we have been doing? I always gave all I could; of course, I had not much to give, but I always gave what I had." Yes, my dear sisters, that is just where the trouble lies. We have not much to give, because we spend our money on everything we need, and on everything we think we need, till we have only a trifle left; and this we give to the missions, and think it is all we can do. I do not mean that we should deprive ourselves of the necessities, or even the comforts, of life—although many, for love of God and their fellowmen, have done both—but we spend thousands of dollars every year on unnecessary and expensive decorations both of our homes and ourselves, and we load our tables with dishes troublesome to make, expensive, and indigestible.

The wealthy members of the congregations clothe themselves in velvet and satin, wear rich furs and costly jewelry, and those who are not so well

off follow hard in their wake, and strain every nerve to make as good, or nearly as good, an appearance as they do. And we worry and grow old and careworn over the fit of our dresses, and give a hundred anxious thoughts to the set of a mantle, and maybe one thought, or half a one, to the paying of the preacher's salary or the raising of money for Home Missions. And while we are vastly troubled about the becomingness of a hat or bonnet, we feel quite easy about the missionaries out in China and Japan who are wrestling with the spirit of vice and ignorance. This perhaps sounds hard, but I am afraid it is too true.

Some Lord's day morning, when the members of the church are gathered together for worship, take a quiet look around you, and see if you think we look like a congregation of the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus; I fear we do not. There were several of us chanced to meet not long ago, at the home of a sister, and what do you think we talked about? Well there is no need of entering into particulars, for you have all no doubt listened to and taken part in just such conversations, conversations that consist of "what shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed." The power lies in our own hands of changing all this. It will no doubt take a good deal of courage and firmness to take a stand against useless expenditure in our homes and on ourselves, but isn't it worth trying.

To furnish our tables more plainly; as people who are not "cumbered about much serving," but who have "chosen that good part which shall not be taken from them." To furnish our houses more plainly; as people who expect to stay in them but a little while till their Father calls them home to His house where there are many mansions. To dress more plainly, as people who expect to lay their bodies down in the grave, there to lie till they are called forth to be clothed with immortality.

There is a very great and grave responsibility resting on you, Christian wives and mothers; for who is able to estimate the influence in the family of a loving and beloved wife and mother. Your husbands come to you for advice and counsel, and your children look up to you, adopt your ideas and copy your words and actions, and quote "mother," as we would quote the apostles; so how careful you should be to set them a good example and to guide their feet into the paths that lead upward.

We have all time and again stood beside the casket that holds all that is earthly of some beloved friend, and through our falling tears looked down on the calm face; the creases made by care and toil on the brow, all smoothed away; the kind eyes that always held a smile of welcome for us, closed forever; the busy hands that never grew weary ministering to the wants of others, folded on the quiet bosom in everlasting rest; our cares and griefs, all nothing to them now, far removed from all earthly interests. And have we thought as we looked on them, I, too, will lie some day just as still, just as unheeding to the sorrow of my grief-stricken friends, all my opportunities of doing good past forever. And when that time comes what will it avail us that we decked our bodies in fashionable attire and "fared sumptuously every day," while the missionaries were cramped for means to carry on their work and the unconverted heathen were dying in millions without ever hearing of their Redeemer? My beloved sisters, ponder these things and consider them well while the opportunity still remains of doing ser-

vice for the Master, lest, when our hour of departure comes, we should have to walk alone "through the valley of the shadow of death" with no Divine presence to guide us through its awful gloom.

Blessed Jesus! help us to think less of the things of this world where our little day is so short, and to think more of the things of that beautiful country where we shall dwell forever and forever more. W. A. S.

Remarks on Foregoing.

The title of the article contributed by "W. A. S."—"What ails the Missions"—suggested to me that the following extract from the *Missionary Review of the World* might prove to be interesting reading, while her question is fresh in the mind.

The writer also asks a question—"Are we disciples of Christ?"

"Whoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke xiv. 33).

"One thing thou lackest, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, and take up thy cross, and follow Me" (Mark x. 21).

"But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part of it, and laid it at the apostles' feet" (Acts v. 1, 2).

Examining ourselves as individuals and as churches, how many disciples of Christ can we find, according to the criterion He has established in the explicit rule and the explicit injunction above quoted?

No dodging! Let us not get behind the pretence of a heart forsaking, while our hands tenaciously grasp the bulk of our possessions.

Let us at least not mock God and

say, "Yes, Lord, I give all to Thee," while we actually give nothing, or a dole, or a tithe; lest we join ourselves with Ananias and Sapphira in infamy as well as perdition. "It were better not to vow."

But all members of evangelical churches have thus vowed. We have all made the profession, or pretence of Ananias and Sapphira.

We have consecrated ourselves and all that we have—our persons, our possessions and our children to the Lord. Where then are the proceeds? Are they fully laid at His feet, according to the profession? Or is a part of them kept back? Is it an honest profession, or a lying pretence like that of those two dreadful monuments of the Lord's indignation at hypocrisy in the church? We do not know how large a part they kept back. Probably it was a small proportion such as they thought would not be noticed.

How many modern Ananiases and Sapphiras are agreeing together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord, while joining in the communion of His supreme self-sacrifice by keeping back, not a minor proportion, but nearly all of that which they have solemnly and publicly dedicated.

Far be it from us to judge one another. But let us remember that there is a Judge, and that if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged. Let us not flatter ourselves, or each other with vain hopes in Christ that are explicitly excluded by His own reiterated warnings.

That is certainly plain, strong language, but no more so than the words of the Book, quoted at the beginning, and no more so than we assent to when we sing:—

Lord I give my all to Thee, Friends and time and earthly store, Soul and body Thine to be Wholly Thine for evermore.

In this connection we might do well to give heed to the apostle's injunction: "Exhort one another daily lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." S. M. Brown

Snow-Flakes.

Whence come ye I—slowly, gently flitting earthward. From the dreary North? From those castellated towers of cloudland? Why visit this cold Northland? Why garland with winter's whitest roses those grand old cedars kissing so tenderly their great brown arms as ye wear your graceful wreaths?

Oh! ye are beautiful things! I like the soft, white petals of the fairest flowers that might bloom in Paradise.

Sweetest music ye bring with your coming, and hearts which throw off the mantle of the senses and attune their soul's harp to the harmonious cadences which float around them can hear the strain.

Symbols of purity ye are—Angel visitants—who have caught up and borne to mortal ears that glorious carol of Judah's hills, "Peace and good will to men." M. M. L.

Crossley and Hunter.

BROTHER MURRO.—I take the liberty of congratulating you for your Christian and manly remarks on the impropriety of co-operating with Crossley and Hunter in their revivals. According to the reports, about eight hundred were converted at Owen Sound. Now if the directions given by the Holy Spirit through Peter were insisted on by these preachers or by our brethren in their public addresses we might reasonably expect that a large part, if not all, of the enquirers would have obeyed the Gospel according to the commission of Christ. Did they do so? Did even a hundred of them do so? I know they did not; and thus, through the help of those who profess to honor Christ and His laws, is the plea they are obligated to keep inviolate set aside and dishonored. Of course these evangelists have a right to work in their own way in this land of religious liberty without interference; but shall we, in our desire for popularity, ignore those principles which form the basis of our organization instead of maintaining uncompromising loyalty to our Saviour.

If these preachers are right, then let us no longer in self-denial co-operate with the minority, but unite with the churches replotted with the converts of the late revival. OBSERVER.

Found at Last.

The scriptural methods of spreading the gospel. By John F. Rowe, for years editor of the late *A. C. Review*, now editor of the *Christian Leader*. Set forth in a recent number of said *Christian Leader*, and reproduced here, still further to make it known to an anxious brotherhood. "Read, mark, learn and inwardly digest," that your mind may never more be disturbed by the question of plans; for these assuredly are the original, primitive, scriptural methods arranged and practised by the Apostles. Here they are, then, with a preface:—

Not satisfied with God's system of faith, men have sought out methods of their own which, as they suppose, will bring about visible results more speedily. It has been alleged by Society builders that Societies originated in the fact that the congregations could not be induced to engage in co-operative missionary work. There is, it must be confessed, some plausibility in this allegation. But inasmuch as Societies are unscriptural and have been organized as a contingency, let the loyal Disciples of Christ go to work and supplant these Societies by

introducing and giving full force to the scriptural methods. But what are the scriptural methods? We answer, let every Christian feel the weight of individual responsibility. First, let him consecrate his money to the Lord. Second, let him select his man and a field of labor. Third, let him select one man or a dozen to co-operate with him, if he has not means enough of his own to support a missionary. If his heart is right in the sight of God, let him begin work at once, and make a start somewhere. If a congregation has sufficient means, let them select their man and his field of labor. If one congregation has not sufficient means, let them invite others to co-operate with them, and the apostolic method is started. If a preacher has faith in God, and believes that the word preached will not return to God void of results, let him go to work somewhere, and educate a constituency that will give him a liberal and honorable support. When liberal-hearted Christians find such a man at work let them rally to his support, and thus be co-operants with the preacher, and the apostolic method is at once inaugurated.

And now, to fortify our minds the more against Societies, let the discoverer of those scriptural methods give us "chapter and verse" for each one of them. Then we shall be able instantly and finally to dispose of any "Society builder" who may attempt to impose upon us.

But seriously, brethren, what is the meaning of all this out-cry against Societies, and all this cool assumption about scriptural methods? Read the above extract over again and see if you do not understand. The writer says, "scriptural methods," but it would have been more accurate for him to have said "my methods," for such they are. The New Testament knows nothing of such methods, neither by precept nor by example; they are of human origin and to be judged accordingly. And we venture to say that most, if not all of the disputes about the respective merits of different men's plans.

And what has often struck us is, that one set of brethren call their plan the Lord's plan, de jure, often fiercely, those who differ from them, yet do little or nothing by that plan, while the other set of brethren make no such lofty claim, simply say it is the best they are acquainted with, not contrary to scriptural principles, and then do all they can by it,—moreover they profess their willingness to give it up, and adopt a better if proposed. The latter class of brethren seem to have considerable advantage over the former. If those who are so sure they know the Lord's plan would go vigorously to work, the unpleasantness over plans would soon subside. It is absurd, not to say unkind, to charge brethren who work with Societies as being indifferent to the word of the Lord, careless whether sinners are saved or not, and only solicitous for their own glory. It would be unreasonable to object to fair criticism, but the continual imputation of bad motives savors not of the spirit of Christ. —Ontario Evangelist, May, 1887.

The Watchman says a needed thing thus. "People, unhappily, overrate the traveling evangelist, whose outfit simply prepares him for a succession of identical four or six weeks' campaigns—and forget what infinitely superior resources the settled minister must have, who has done brave army-duty for the Lord ten or twenty years on the same battle-ground. The severest of all tests is the test of monotony and uniformity. Contrasted with one who is only good for special occasions, the worker who is "a sure thing" on a dead level, and never fails in the long pull, is a whole summer to a single sunrise."