

tinctly responsible. They are a part of our four million. Lofly temples, with their great tiled roofs, tower above the humble, thatched dwellings of the poor peasant, even in the lonely places among the mountains, but there is not a Christian church or chapel of any description there, not a missionary or a native worker. Does it seem to you that Japan is evangelized, that our work there is done? It has only had a good beginning.

It was right that we should have begun at the centres of population. So deeply rooted was prejudice, that for many years Christianity could gain no foothold in the country places where the influence of the Buddhist priest is supreme. A man who would sell or rent his property for Christian services would have been in many instances, if not in most, excommunicated. To-day they welcome us everywhere. A missionary was about to leave for the home land on furlough. A mistaken impression had gone abroad that he was not to return.

Hearing this, a large number of business and professional men signed and circulated a petition praying the missionary to come back. They knew that he stood for something that no other man in that community did.

Now the watchword is, "Out into the country!" In the last five years we have opened up about forty new preaching places in country towns and villages. We have every reason for encouragement, but the biggest part of our task lies still before us.

How many workers have we in Japan? Nineteen male missionaries and W.M.S. missionaries twenty-seven; all told, native and foreign, about two hundred. At least half of these are local preachers and Bible women. Suppose that every one of them was a capable preacher, he would have a congregation of over twenty thousand. Can one man evangelize effectively that many people? No. Then we are not yet measuring up to the definite obligation we have assumed for these four millions.

Thoughts on Prayer

FOURTH PAPER.

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WHEN we draw nigh to God in prayer, we do so under the sanction of this gracious promise: "It shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." How eager, then, He must be to welcome us to His footstool! But is it not true that our experiences do not always square with that wonderful promise? There must be a cause for this. As His promises are "Yea and amen, unto the glory of God by us," that cause must be in us, and in every experience of that sort we should examine ourselves, where we may be in the fault; and prove our own selves," as St. Paul advises. We shall find that something in ourselves, or something we have done, or some duty left undone, has kept us without the answer from God which we expected.

Our Lord's words may suggest one cause: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." What occurs when that "faint" takes place? We grow languid in soul, and we cease to be receptive of the blessings we feel we need and have sought, and so to our consciousness the light has faded, and the darkness has fallen. What has to be done now? Give up all as lost! No! Let another promise answer that question: "The Lord will wait that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore He will be exalted that He may have mercy upon you. . . . He will be very gracious unto thee, ye voice of thy cry; when He shall hear it He will answer thee." Then we should shut ourselves in with God again, and "cry."

St. Peter affirms that although we may be fellow-heirs of the grace of life, "our prayers may be hindered," and shows that lack of harmony in the close relations of life may cause such hindrance; for he says: "Be ye of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that thereto ye are called, that ye should inherit a blessing." Now here is a large aid for necessary self-examination when we are under the shadow of disappointment, because we have failed to hear God's answering voice.

Our prayers hindered, and by ourselves, and we felt so much need, and were so earnest while offering them? Yes, by ourselves largely. Among many other things which experience will aid us to know, is this:—the Christian life is a conflict, the

conflict of which is the loss or gain of eternal life. And so small part of that conflict lies in the painful discovery, and the strenuous removal, of all that hinders our growth to perfection in spirituality and service. We speedily learn that our own undisciplined nature will give us more trouble than any outside foe can cause. It will be ever needful to see to it that everything in us shall be brought into subjection "to the Father of spirits" that we may "live," and resist every foe against whom in that conflict for life we shall have to contend. In the noise of the conflict our "cry" can reach unto God, who says He will hear and be gracious.

We must jealously guard ourselves against the love of any spiritually hurtful thing. No form of worldliness, be it ever so pleasant or gainful, must turn us away from God or lessen our zeal in His service. No neglect of any means of grace must be allowed. The Word of God must be hid in our hearts lest we sin against Him. We must persist in our intercourse with God, on His part loving, definite paternal—on ours, sincere, earnest, trustful. He must be supremely loved, and His word to us must be life's supreme law. As the Master taught we must pray, "Thy will be done" by us, everywhere, on all occasions, under all circumstances.

Henry Ward Beecher once wrote, "If you say 'Thy will be done,' and you say to yourself, 'Oh! I can pray that,' and all the time your mind goes round and round in immense circuits and far-off distances; but God is continually bringing the circuits nearer to you, till He says, 'Now is the time for thy prayers and your praise.' How is it about your business and your daily life?" This is a revolutionary petition.

If upon examination we cannot answer such questions satisfactorily, we must not give up the fight. We should lay everything before the Lord, and tell Him our troubles, our lack of knowledge and understanding of which the Holy Spirit is our appointed teacher, and with the Psalmist cry to God, "Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there is any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Let us deal honestly with ourselves in these things, and how long shall the shadow or the pain of disappointment be upon us? The waiting God, our Father and our Saviour, answers

that question: "At the voice of thy cry when He shall hear it, He will answer thee."

Of the special hindrance to prayer to which St. Peter draws attention, Don't Quorn, a favorite of ours, has this to say: "Brotherly love is a thing that our Lord is so particular about, that He won't let a man knock at the door of heaven till He is in love and charity with his neighbor; much less will He open the windows of heaven for him." That is a true lesson for us. If we learn it and practise it well, it will help keep our prayers from being hindered.

The earnest Christian soon learns that the way of our pilgrimage runs not always along green pastures and still waters. Many parts of it are ways of pleasantness and peace; other parts are where we need the "shoes of iron and brass." Up to sunlit heights, down to deep valleys, where the deadly shadows lie; up again to heavenly places where all things brighter into beauty, up craggy steepes where are dangers for the feet of the unwary, and weariness for the steady, careful climber; but never away from the eye and ear of our attentive and waiting God. And so will it be, until on "the eternal hills of God," he shall stand in the holy place, where, as on his journey, but in larger measure, "he shall receive the blessing of the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the heritage of them that seek Him." "All the paths of the Lord," even the painful ones and the steep, are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies."

What I Can Do in a General Way to Make My Country Better and Brighter

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A Governor-General of Canada stated in an address to the Members of Parliament, that before the end of the present century, Canada would not only be the granary, but the heart and soul and rudder of the empire. Why not? Canada has an increasing population, vast material resources, a splendid climate, abundant optimism, and hustling young Canadians. But do these constitute a nation?

A nation's strength is not in its houses, and barns, and lands, and wheat; but in its righteousness. Canada can be great only as she utilizes her material forces for the development of character in the lives of her individual citizens, and for the upbuilding and extension of Christian Kingdom everywhere.

Then is the law of greatness is individual service, what can I, one individual living in an infinitely small space of this great Dominion, do in a general way to make my country better and brighter?

A good citizen will do his or her duty. Social service is the high law of duty, hence one should encourage the social life of the community. Man is a social being and it is right that he should have social enjoyment. When friends meet together in a social way, they come near to one another, not only in body but also in spirit. They meet together not as business or professional men, but in their own real characters. One should enter into the social life of a community with the determination to be kind and helpful to everyone. To be cheerful and optimistic, no matter what comes, is one of the noblest of ambitions. We should try and cultivate the habit of looking on the sunny side. Cheerfulness always strengthens bravery.

As a Christian citizen I should encourage the advancement of any society, organization, or club which is of moral and spiritual benefit in the upbuilding