

## EDITORIAL

### Soul Food

"Lack of sufficient nourishment," was what they said of the cause of a child's sadly weakened condition recently. "Eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness," were the words suggested to my mind. Children suffer in the slums because of insufficient or unwholesome food, and we pity them; but there are soul slums as well as slums in which the bodies of men and women live. The soul can no more thrive on an unwholesome diet than can the body. There is a law of health which all must honor if they would have strong soul natures, just as there is a law of physical well-being that cannot be violated without suffering and loss. God has made provision for the soul health of all his children, and none but ourselves are blameworthy if spiritual emaciation exists. The abundance of appropriate soul food leaves no excuse for spiritual weakness in any of us. Wherein then is our chief fault? Is it not in seeking substitutions for the living Bread? May we not well stop and ponder the old prophet's query, "Wherefore spend ye money for that which is not bread?" What are we eating? On the answer depends our soul health and vigor, and our choice of soul food decides our spiritual destiny. What a blessing is hunger when the felt need is met at every stage, and that is what the beatitude implies, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." God give us a good appetite, a healthy digestion, and save us from substituting anything for "the living bread which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."

### Human Sympathy

What a wealth of suggestiveness is in that well-known and all too little practised admonition, "Put yourself in his place." Poor Job! Well might he say to his friends, "If your soul were in my soul's stead" things might not appear so and so to you. "Miserable comforters" indeed are we, because we fail to get the viewpoint of the other man. We are free to counsel, advise, prompt, yea even condemn, when we have after all but partial, and it may be prejudicial, knowledge or notions in our minds regarding the case in hand. It is easy to tell someone else how to do, what to say, when to act; but paper talk is cheap, and not until one has sought to change places with the other fellow can one truly guide, sympathize, or console. "I never imagined what you must have felt when your child died until I lost my own dear baby," said a sorrowing mother to another whose grief had preceded her own in the death of a loved little one. And it is ever so! One must suffer to comfort the suffering. One must lose to console with those who have lost. Our words are often cold and our sympathy formal because we do not seek to know how the case really appears to our fellow-man. "Bear ye one another's burdens" is never possible until we have commenced at least to learn "the law of Christ," and that is love. What we need most of all are warmer hearts. Only so can the throbbings of real sympathy be felt, and not until then can we be moved to activities that will show a measure of true appreciation of our brother-man's need and prompt us to assist him to the utmost of our power.

### Purpose in Life

You know the first psalm, perhaps you can repeat it quite readily; but did you ever sit down and ponder thoughtfully the mighty, overmastering purpose that is breathed all through those first two verses? What kind of a man is here set forth? Analyze the words as you may,

there stands out most prominently the dominance of a mighty purpose in his soul. He will not yield to ungodly counsels, he will not make companions of sinners, he will not associate with scornful men. What a series of sublime negatives! Think what a long inventory might be made of the things a high-souled youth must not do. True, a well-rounded Christian character can never be developed by merely negative goodness, that is by the not doing of bad things; but after all there must be strong and persistent denial of every evil by that Christian who would learn to excel in the knowledge and practice of good. "Cease to do evil" precedes "learn to do well." And so the two-fold purpose of this man is manifest. He will not consent to evil, he will exalt the good. "The law of the Lord," meaning the rule of God in his life, becomes his delight, and that this may be the predominant influence in the construction of his character and the guidance of his actions, he studies diligently that he may know the supreme desire of his Maker concerning him. No wonder his soul grows. Life's highest ends are conserved only when one is in harmony with one's environment, and the soul's environment is God. A flourishing tree whose roots are ever nourished by perennial springs is no more likely to abide in vigor and fruitfulness than is that man whose purpose is to find his soul's nutriment in God.

### The Strength of Manhood

Reading David's parting counsels to Solomon the other day, I was impressed very forcibly with the appeal the old King made to his son, "Shew thyself a man." As never before that word "shew" kept knocking at my mind's door, and as I pondered over it I thought that one of our greatest needs to-day is the showing forth of the strength of manhood. The possession of manly strength is one thing, the exhibition of it is another. Of what use is strength to a man who does not apply it? He may have much knowledge, but unless he transforms it into practical wisdom in the proper discharge of all life's responsible duties, what good will it all do him? He may have great muscular power, but if he never uses it to help the weak or endangered ones about him it will become a disgrace rather than a glory. Yes, it is good to "be strong," as David said, but it is better to *show* it. And what if it is not shown? Weakness follows. A man must use or lose his strength, for manhood is not a merely mechanical product resulting from the action of external forces, but the result of vital principles operating within the soul. God gives not for self-enrichment, but for investment by use. You have! Show what you have! Employ it in the great world of human need and the very exercise will mean growth and increase. God needs men, strong men, useful men, men who show their faith by their works and so help to bring answer to the prayer "Thy Kingdom Come." Seek strength; but remember that if that strength be not shown it will soon be shorn and leave you at last a weakling.

### Be a Booster

Don't you get rather tired sometimes when you hear some "knocker," with rasping criticism, condemning practically everything that does not conform to his own opinions as to religious life or work? We do. And particularly so when the Epworth League is in question. It was a pretty good cartoon, though not especially artistic, which we saw on the wall of Thorold Methodist Church on the occasion of the last St. Catharines District Convention there. One figure represented a sturdy fellow with shoulder to the wheel trying to help the loaded wagon along; the other showed a scrawny arm with hammer clutched in bony hand, and uplifted to strike something or somebody, it evidently did not matter what or whom. Underneath the whole was printed the words, "Boost, don't knock." It did us good to sit and look at it thoughtfully for a few minutes between sessions, as well as to glance at it occasionally during the meeting hours. Dear