

# The Prayer Meeting

## Notes and Suggestions on the Uniform Topics.

By S. John Duncan-Clark.

### Patient Continuance.

May 7.—Patient continuance in well-doing.  
Rom. 2:1-11.

DAILY READINGS.—Monday: Need of patience, Heb. 10:35-39. Tuesday: Patience of the prophets, Jas. 5:7-11. Wednesday: Who did hinder you? Gal. 5:1-12. Thursday: Perfect work of patience, Jas. 1:1-4. Friday: Tribulation worketh patience, Rom. 5:1-5. Saturday: Be not weary, Gal. 6:6-10.

#### Pauline Paragraphs.

No one had a better right, surely, to discourse upon "patient continuance," or, as the more literal translation reads, "endurance in good work," than Paul. His life was a living illustration of this splendid and essential characteristic of success. It was this quality of "keeping at it" that made Saul so formidable a persecutor, and Paul so mighty an apostle. No difficulties, no dangers, no warnings ever turned him back from what he considered the path of duty, and the same spirit of determination reproduced in the lives of his converts brought the Roman world to the feet of his Master in the space of two hundred years from Pentecost.

The power of continuity has practically no limit. It is the man who has staying-strength whose efforts will eventually be crowned with success. A well known preacher tells of how, in being shown over a great steel manufactory, he saw in a certain room a mass of steel, tons in weight, suspended from the roof, and beside it at some little distance a small ball of cork hanging at the end of a thread. "What is that for?" he asked of his conductor. "Oh, we use them in an experiment; we set the steel swinging by swinging the cork against it," was the reply. "Nonsense," replied the preacher, "I'm not so easily taken in as all that." "But it is true," said his informant, "only it takes some twenty minutes to do." "Well, let me see you do it, and I will believe you," challenged the still sceptical preacher. So the experiment was begun. The cork was pulled back, and then let swing against the inert mass of steel. It rebounded, and the great, black weight hung motionless. The preacher smiled. It was too absurd. Again and again the cork gently kissed the steel, but each time only to be repelled by the coldly immovable monster. Ten minutes went by, and the preacher was tired of it; he wanted to go on; but now his conductor insisted he should remain. Fifteen minutes slowly elapsed; the cork still kissed, and the monster still hung motionless. Another minute; what was that? Yes, this time it was unmistakable, the steel shuddered at the touch of the cork. The shudder became a tremble; the tremble grew to a slight swing, and as the hand of the preacher's watch indicated twenty full minutes the monster was swaying back and forth with the solemn dignity of a ponderous pendulum. The cork had conquered by the power of patient continuance.

In his first letter to the Corinthians Paul gives a beautiful analysis of Christian character that concludes with a statement of the elemental forces in the spiritual life. "But now," he says, "abide—

faith, hope, and love—these three; but the greatest of these is love." The emphasis is on "abide." The greatness of this trinity lies in its attribute of continuance; and love is greatest of all three because it possesses this attribute most markedly. In their abiding power, faith, hope, and love work out all the other characteristics of the Christ nature. It is because these three remain, persisting when all else has ceased to be, that they are the mightiest spiritual forces in the kingdom of heaven. They are in great measure the power of the endless life concerning which Paul writes in his letter to the Hebrews, and under the dominance of which thought he lived and wrought his apostleship. It is this thought, too, that will bring to us the patience needed for endurance in good work. Ours is an endless life. Have you ever thought of it? We have a whole eternity in which to work God's will. The quality of infinity belongs to our words and deeds. Let this truth give dignity to our labor and strength to our purpose. We can afford to keep at it; to persist; to do things thoroughly; for ours is an endless life, and when we have well finished this duty, we shall have just as much time left in which to do the next, and the next, and the next. Get hold of this truth and you will see the things of time and circumstance in their right perspective. It will enable you to assume your place as a factor in the eternal counsels of God, and will give you the triumph of superiority over the trivial vexations and worries incident to a life of limitations.

#### Songs by the Way.

"Down life's dark vale," "One more day's work," "Not now, my child," "O spirit overwhelmed," "Let us sing as we journey," "Not now but in the," "Sowing the precious seed," "There is never a day," "In a world where."

#### Love Suffereth Long.

"Love suffereth long and is kind."—Paul.

God's treatment of me is the most wonderful example of patience I know.

The great Niagara gorge was cut by a stream of water everlastingly "keeping at it."

A disheartened Christian scores one for the devil; a Christian encouraged scores ten against him.

There is plenty of time to "try again," since we are living an endless life. God measures success not by achievement, but by endeavor.

If a soul was worth dying for, it is worth trying for. Don't give up the fight at the first repulse. The strong city will yield to a long siege. Remember, "Love never faileth"; it is only a question of keeping at it.

Patient endurance

Attaineth to all things.—Longfellow.

There are briars besetting every path,

That call for patient care;

There is a crook in every lot,

And a need for constant prayer;

But a lonely heart that leans on Thee

Is happy everywhere.—Anna L. Waring.

#### In Patience Win Your Souls.

A glance at our Revised Version, "In your patience ye shall win your souls," shows us that this text is a promise, not a command, a blessed hope, not a stern ordinance. What is the spirit of this