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The Gospel Leaven.

REV. ALBERT B. ROBINSON.

The gospel possesses a penetrating, assimilating power. Truth is brought into contact with human souls, and the kingdom grows inwardly by its contagious influence.

A missionary is hidden in a great empire. Very few know of his presence. In obscurity he patiently works, and the results are at first small and seemingly insignificant. But he has introduced into society a vitalizing force that works silently, unnoticed. A life is transformed, then a family, finally a whole village.

The value of Christian missions cannot be measured by counting the number of baptisms. Even in communities that do not accept Christ, and where few receive direct instruction, there is often a gradual uplifting of the social condition. Before the silent, disintegrating forces of Christian truth, bad customs die out. Sins that were once universal become exceptional; a public conscience grows up among the people; and they manifest a desire to live cleaner lives. The weakening force of native custom appears among the Zulus when the practice of selling daughters to would-be husbands slowly loses its hold upon the people. Christian missions in Persia, we are told, are producing an increasing undercurrent tending towards secular as well as religious progress. From Kashmir comes the report that the standard of moral teaching is being raised; that, in spite of the objection of the people to Christianity, ideas essentially Christian are filtering through their prejudices and influencing many lives. A teacher in Calcutta says of the girls in her school: "The light they have is dim compared with that flooding our own favored land. Though not yet Christians, they are rapidly learning habits of self control. If they are not walking in the light, they are at least creeping in the dawn."

"A regenerate man," says Dr. Dennis, "become a new and living force in unregenerate society. A Christian community, even though small and obscure, is a renewed section of society. Both are as leaven in the mass, with a mysterious capacity for permeating the whole."

A girl returns from a mission school, and at once her home becomes a brighter place. The girls of the Gilbert and Marshall Islands, educated at Kusaie, return as teachers, and there is a transformation in the methods of living. A native of Savage Island returned from Samoa, where the gospel had been preached, and convinced his countrymen of the need of a change. As a result, that island, which as late as 1830 no white man dared to visit, is transformed and Christianized.

In 1897 Dr. McGilvary gave a religious tract to a Kan Mool man in the French Laos territory. The man had been a Buddhist priest and could read. He and his friends became believers in the Christian religion. During a tour made in 1898 Dr. McGilvary found a Christian community. The chief and a whole village accepted the gospel and began to keep the Sabbath.

When ideas better than those taught in native books are received, when purer lives are lived than they had known before, there comes at last a feeling of dissatisfaction with the old creed. Missionary statesmen have learned by the experience of the past that a community may be Christianized by sending into it men and women who carry in themselves the true leaven of Christianity.

"If you are weary of waiting," said Judson in Burmah, "just leave me, and twenty years hence look this way again." Before the twenty years had passed there were many converts. He was willing to labor patiently, and wait "till the whole was leavened."

Those words suggest an important lesson. We should not be satisfied with partial growth and imperfect development, but seek to reach

the whole man,—all his faculties, all his powers and possibilities.

The words, "till the whole is leavened," contain a glorious promise of final triumph.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

—Endeavor World.

Being on Hand.

We were impressed afresh the other night at prayer meeting with the service rendered by the boy with the five loaves and two small fishes mentioned in the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. Jesus had been talking to the multitude all day long, and as the evening shadows lengthened, he was confronted with the problem of feeding the vast multitude of hungry people. "Where shall we secure provisions for so many?" he asked Philip. The answer was, "There is a lad here with five loaves and two small fishes, but what are they among so many?" No matter who the lad was; he may have been nephew of Simon and Andrew, and have brought to his uncles their humble lunch. However this may be, the boy was on hand with his thin barley cakes, and his dried fish, when occasion came for the feeding of the multitude. Had he not been there would the result have been different? Probably the Lord would have found other means to accomplish his purpose. But he was there, and the meagre fare he bore was multiplied to become a feast for the thousands who during the day had been drinking in Jesus' words.

There is much in this for encouragement and stimulus for the ordinary Christian. Not all work, not the most work, is done by direct commission. Much of it is wrought out because the instrument happens to be on hand. Was not this so with Isaiah when the sublime vision in the temple blazed out before his eyes? He was not sent there, he was there, and when the question was asked, "Who will go for us," he could respond, "Here am I, send me." The want of the world to day is not the lack of opportunities for service, it is rather that there be on hand those who can utilize the opportunities that are afforded.

Let us then, in the various positions and relationships opening before us, seek to be on hand. It may mean the weekly prayer meeting in the summer time, when possibly the pastor is absent, and the numbers are few. Our offering we may deem as meagre as was the lunch the lad of the New Testament brought to the band of the Lord's disciples, but if we are on hand with it, it may be made as adequate to the occasion as was it. It may be in the Sabbath service; we fancy, perhaps, that our presence or our absence will count for little, but being on hand, we may find the opportunity offering for a service the Lord will most gladly accept. It may be in the ordinary relations of life. Some one may have fallen who needs lifting; some one may be sorrowing who needs comfort; some one may be discouraged who needs a word of help. We may not be commissioned to go to any of these, but if we are on hand, we may be used, perhaps, as we have said. Our supplies may be as meagre as was the boy's lunch in the face of the wants of the multitude. But beneath the touch of the Omnipotent Christ, as the one was equal to the feeding of the thousands, the other may be equal to the wants by which it is confronted. Being on hand may transform a common errand into a divine service, and multiply what seemed hardly sufficient for one into an adequate supply for a host.—Commonwealth.

Great battles are really won before they are actually fought. To control our passions, we must govern our habits, and keep watch over ourselves in the small details of everyday life.—Sir John Lubbeck.

Laying Aside Every Weight.

A successful worker in one of our rescue missions is a lady who was formerly a society belle, but who has now consecrated her brilliant social and intellectual gifts and her beautiful voice entirely to the Lord's work among the lost and degraded. She once remarked that she clung to dancing and cardplaying for years after she made a profession of religion; and that her real joy in the Christian life did not come until these things had been given up altogether. One evening about two weeks after she had made this full consecration, she went into a little mission room, and was there asked to say something helpful to a poor wreck of a man who had been for many years a gambler. The man looked at her suspiciously.

"Do you play cards?" he asked.

"No."

"Do you go to the theatre?"

"No; not now."

"Very well," he said, "then you may talk to me. But I won't listen to one word from your fine folks who are doing, on a small scale, the very things that have brought us poor wretches where we are."

"Can you not believe," added the lady who told the story, "that the joy of being able to teach the way of life to that lost soul was more to me than all the poor little pleasures I had given up for Jesus' sake?"—Exchange.

Devotion.

N. B. RANDALL.

The assertion is frequently made that the era of devotion has passed away. It is claimed that people live selfish lives and are interested in nothing which does not promise adequate return.

While it may be true that egoism is, more frequently than altruism, the master motive, the fact remains that the altruistic spirit has not perished from the earth. Devotion is not dead. In proof of this we submit the following true story.

Twenty years ago the Rev. Dr. ——— was a professor in one of our universities. A few miles from this seat of learning in a little hamlet lived several Baptist families. The heart of the professor went out to them and he brought them together in church relationship and served them gratuitously as pastor. Not satisfied with that he and his devoted wife defrayed most of the cost of a beautiful church building. On one Sunday morning during the introductory services the pastor announced that he was unable to preach. It was soon discovered that he had been stricken with apoplexy. A bed was brought and in the place where he had so often led the people in worship he yielded up his spirit to God.

Thenceforth stronger ties than before bound that sad hearted wife to the little church. During all the fifteen years since her husband's death she has retained her membership with the little band of believers. Although residing in another State and two hundred miles away she makes a pilgrimage to her Mecca at every communion season. Three-fourths of the annual expenses of the church are still paid by her.

Whenever a revival or other cause requires her presence she goes to the little band and remains among them as long as she is needed. More than all, this eminent woman whose counsels are sought by the boards of our national societies takes her place among the humble dwellers in that hamlet as one of the least of them all.

While her prayers are exceptionally earnest for many important religious causes she ever pleads above all, for this little country flock which, but for her fostering care, would long have been scattered.

No, devotion is not dead! Over some hearts