

Our Young People

THE STORY OF AN UNWILLING MISSIONARY.

Topic for October 22—"AN OLD-TIME MISSIONARY."—Jonah 3: 1-10.

"I'll go where you want me to go, Lord,
Over mountain or vale or sea."

(For Dominion Presbyterian.)

Men Sent of God.

By Woodford.

It strikes one in studying the Daily Rings in connection with this topic, is willingness of God that men should be sent, and the unwillingness, because of unbelief, of men—for which in every instance themselves are to blame—to be laborers with Him to this end. In each instance God calls; in the first four selfishness, uncleanliness, weakness, are made grounds for refusal. The Twelve appear to be enthusiastic, but the fact of the use as to who was greatest, occurring thirty afterwards, proves that their work I not have been what it might have been. Their case, as in that of Philip, we see how everance in the duties that arise, as the Lord go by, leads, in the good providence of God, to work that tells. But lest we will imagine that our own judgment, and light, common to all, that we have, are grounds for the justification of our conduct, have the case of Paul showing us that the will of God is the supreme thing, the loving Christ is living Lord, and Spirit of God our Director, our reasoner and planner and working man meaner persecution—it does not make much difference whether this should assume the form of indifference or of actual opposition. Nah's care was for himself and his name, and such selfishness so narrowed his mind that he feared lest He who commissioned him should fail to protect him. Of course selfishness could and can find a hundred other uses. Moses did not, when he was called, understand that one with God is a majority, that He who is all, and in whose presence the morning stars sang together for had sufficient resources left to make up his lack of eloquence. Isaiah seemed to like a great many in our day who are willing to wait until they are good enough to join the church, or engage directly in religious work as if they could sanctify themselves, or make of themselves new creatures. He learned what we need to learn, that "this is the will of God, even your sanctification." It is hard work to help a man who feels pretty sure he can do the thing himself. When Isaiah saw the holiness of God, and came to realize his own unholiness (so few of us really do) so that he cast himself on God, then he was fitted for work that had to be done. Jeremiah is the type of the Christian individuals or nations at times and again are found standing apart before the wretchedness and sin of their cities, their politics, the heathen nations. How often has the cry, "I am a child," been heard when the consciousness ought to have been that those who know of the wrong of the sin are so given to understand that they are appointed to speak on behalf of God and not to be afraid. It may cost the prophet his life to deliver the message, but the world is so deeply indebted to Jeremiah, above all to Jesus Christ and his followers such as Paul and Luther, and John Knox and Cromwell.

"I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord,
I'll be what you want me to be."

Our God has magnificent work for us to do in the home, in the church, in the community, in our country and for other nations. "Ye shall be witnesses in Jerusalem and Judaea and to the uttermost parts of the earth." In the gatherings of such as realize in a measure the force of these words the thought should not be who is greatest. Go up higher than that to the Upper Room to wait for the promise of the Father. When the tinsel of self-righteousness, and the tawdriness of my honor are exchanged for the dress that is for the road, the dust, the mire, for the livery of the hospital, then am I a laborer together with God. Pilate and Caiaphas and they who live in kings' houses may wear soft raiment; the disciples, beginning to know, may dispute about position and honor. Those consecrated to the work of God wish to know how much they can do.

There still are Ninevehs—individuals, cities, countries—to be called to repentance. Has not God showed us as He showed Jonah that to withhold His message from these is to bring ourselves into like perils with them, that it is dishonoring Him who is willing to save and has made abundant provision for the salvation of all, that it is to rob ourselves of partnership and fellowship in the work that is His delight?

Each society as each individual, can easily think of persons and cities and countries to whom the warning and the invitation of God ought to be given; and those who ought to give ought also to consider whether it is selfishness or unfitness, lack of holiness or courage, striving for personal honor, lack of application or opposition that is the hindrance, the obstacle to be removed. Pray then, in Christ's name, for that which you need to do the work that must be done; for the king's business calls for haste. Feeble hands and helpless are ever being held out; who will be the laborers together with God to the end that these feeble hands and helpless may be lifted up and strengthened?

In China a million towns and villages are waiting for the first proclamation of the Gospel. "The harvest is truly plenteous, but the laborers are few." In India there is but one missionary to every 400 villages, and 180,000 of the population. In Africa there is one vast region where the population exceeds that of the United States without one missionary. The work of evangelization is not optional but obligatory. What are you doing? What excuse can you offer for negligence or disobedience?

Mr. James Y. Simpson, M.A., B.Sc., has been appointed to the lectureship in Natural Science in Glasgow College. This was the post held by the late Professor Henry Drummond.

The golden moments in the stream of life rush past us, and we see nothing but sand, the angels come to visit us, and we only know them when they are gone.—George Eliot.

The wise man does not spend his time in mourning over his disadvantages, but in making the best use of the privileges he possesses.

Difficulties Overcome.

William Carey had become convinced that he ought to make an attempt at the evangelization of the heathen. Jordans of all sorts of difficulties—poverty, sneers, apathy of the church, oppositions of the great and rich East India Company,—rolled wide, deep ragingly, before him. But in God's name he smote the Jordan with his mantle; he took what he had, his purpose, enthusiasm, learning, the pitiable money he could gather, and dared attempt. And lo! the Jordan was divided for him,—surprising way was made for missions. The work of William Carey is one of the world's wonders. Dare for God. Go forth, as Elijah did, and smite opposing Jordans in God's name.—Wayland H. vt.

For Christ's Sake.

Whatever may be between us and our speaking to men, let us go through it. If it be a foreign language, remember that Christ lived thirty years in preparation. If it be hardship, cold, poor food, scorn, slight, deaf ears,—never mind, go ahead, Christ looks to us to go ahead, or come ahead, for he has gone through it all. Trouble, hardship, trial, suffering, all will soon pass and be done. And is there a trouble or hardship we have yet surmounted for Christ's sake that does not seem sweet to look back on? Then, come what likes, let us face it; or if we be overwhelmed, let us be overwhelmed with undaunted faces looking in the right direction.—James Gilmore.

Prosperity rarely brings out the best there is in a man. A man's adversities are often his most stimulating friends.

Daily Readings.

Monday, October 16—Moses. Exod. 3: 1-10; 4: 10-16.
Tuesday, October 17.—Isaiah. Isa. 6: 1, 13.
Wednesday October 18—Jeremiah. Jer. 1: 1-19.
Thursday, October 19—The twelve. Matt. 10: 1-8.
Friday, October 20—Philip, the evangelist. Acts 6: 1-6; 8: 5-8, 26, 36, 40.
Saturday, October 21—Paul. Acts 9: 10-16.
Sunday, October 22.—Topic. An old time missionary. Jonah 3: 1-10. (A missionary meeting.)

Hints for Talks and Testimonies.

How did the thought of missions start?
What different reasons for mission work may be given?
Why was Jonah unwilling to go as a missionary?
What are the reasons for lack of enthusiasm about missions?
What does the book of Jonah show as to God's feeling toward indifference about missions?
There are difficulties in the way of mission work; what does Jonah's experience suggest as to the difficulties that will be met in disobeying Christ's command?
What encouragements to missionary effort is to be found in the results of Jonah's work?
What place did missions hold among the Jews?
How do the needs and opportunities to-day compare with those in Jonah's time?
What privileges have we in living in a missionary century?