

STRENGTH BY EXERCISE.**Some Bible Hints.**

There is no virtue in listening and hearing; it is nothing but empty air until it is transmuted into doing (v. 22.)

There is no reality in an image in a mirror; as unreal and unsubstantial is talking without doing (v. 23).

Yet it is by this "foolishness of preaching" and hearing that men are to be saved; the danger is not in the hearing, certainly, but in being a "forgetful hearer" (v. 25).

Even religion may be "defiled" (v. 27); and the religion most defiled of all in the eyes of God is the religion of a hypocrite, that is made up only of words.

Suggestive Thoughts.

It is a sound principle never to allow one's emotion to be stirred in favor of a good action, without at once going and performing it.

That a Christian is "known by his fruits" is not to say that the fruits makes the Christian; it is the Christian that makes the fruits—it is the union with the Vine.

Christ's desire for us is not that we bear fruit, but that we bear much fruit. We are not half ambitious enough in our Christianity.

Every valuable exercise may be carried on without apparatus. It does not need wealth and learning to do grand things for God.

A Few Illustrations.

One may harm his body by wrong exercises as much as he benefits it by right ones. See that what you do for Christ is what He wants you to do.

When you are weak in a certain part of the body, you take exercises adapted to that part. So there are kinds of church work that will build you up just where you are weak spiritually.

To be most beneficial, exercise should be regular and systematic. So with our Christian labors.

The athlete keeps a record of his growing powers, and the record helps him to grow stronger. We should know in the same way that we are growing stronger in definite Christian service.

To Think About.

What definite Christian work am I doing.

Is my work for Christ up to the measure of my powers?

Is there any work which Christ wants me to do that I am not doing?

A Cluster of Quotations.

A man who would have God's guidance must be willing to make spiritual things his main business.—H. C. Mabie.

A man must consecrate and then concentrate.—Moody.

Obedience is the spiritual organ of knowledge.—Robertson.

Only fixed convictions will produce permanent Christian activity, and only those who are actively at work will maintain fixed convictions.—Broadus.

All At It.

One important task of the lookout committee is to see not only that the members are faithful to the duty of

verbal testimony for Christ, according to their powers, but also that each member is developing all his powers of service. Have a programme as definite as a school curriculum. You may place the beginners, for instance, upon the flower committee. Let them go next to the music committee, or the social committee, or the good-literature committee, or the information committee. The Sunday-school committee, the missionary committee, the junior committee, of the prayer-meeting committee may come next, and the lookout committee belongs to those that are nearly completing the course.

Wesley's motto, "All at it, and always at it," is a good motto for any Endeavor society.

It is a good plan to place every member upon some committee, beginning with the easy work, and advancing him as fast as possible to the work that is most difficult.

LIVING ON A HIGH PLANE.

One of the loftiest utterances of our Lord was his declaration that he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister to others, and to give his life a ransom for many. We may easily measure the nobility of our motives by comparison with the perfect standard thus set before us.

Anything that a man does unselfishly for the sake of another is of a higher order than if done merely for himself. Devotion to the interests of wife or children has saved many men from moral degradation. Maintenance of the honor of a family name is a strong incentive to noble living with many. There is this advantage in some instances in hereditary nobility. One who knows that back of him stands a long line of high-minded and noble ancestors, who have handed down to him their name and their fame, trusting him to pass them on to the next generation untarnished, has a mighty motive to honorable conduct. He feels that the very pictures of his ancestors which hang upon the walls would blush with shame should he bring dishonor upon the family name. This motive operates with many a young man in relation to his parents, living or dead. He acts nobly for their sake. When he chooses the right he says, "I decide thus for my mother's sake, I do this for my father's honor." Alas for the young man who has ceased to feel the power of this motive!

Patriotism furnishes a high class of motives. When a man acts for his country's sake he acts nobly. Patriotism is the spirit of the higher nobility, not that of a little hereditary family nobility, but the nobility of a great nation and a great race. The patriot identifies himself with the honor of his nation. This feeling is finely expressed by an English poet in these lines: "Do you count it a little thing to be born with an English name?"

To be heir of a race that has climbed through a thousand years to fame?"

Nelson's seamen fought at Trafalgar for England's honor and glory; and though pirates before them had fought just as bravely, Nelson's ships will sail the seas of history in a halo of imperishable glory, because, from the great admiral to the humblest sailor, the men who fought upon their decks that day remembered that England expected every man to do his duty.

The determining principle is this: All work and actions are of value in proportion to the worthiness and greatness of the person in whose name and for whose sake ultimately they are performed. Self-motivated actions are of the lowest worth, because they lack in generous and loving quality. It is only as we act for the sake of others that our actions rise into highest moral worthiness. But no human being or institution is great enough to be entitled to rule our activities, nor to lift them up to the highest range. The servant can not be greater than his master. We require some One of such infinite personal worth as to be entitled to our entire service, and who can give to us such wide and exalted employment as to secure for us unlimited moral growth. That requirement is met by Christ, in whose name and for whose sake we should give even the cup of cold water, and love for whom should be the master-motive of every word and deed:

"Shall Duty be just the task that is under our eyes—no more?"
Shall we never straighten the back, and glance behind or before?
Is Duty the daily toil for one sole hearth and home,
Blind to all other claims, and the lineage whence we come?
If duty waits at the forge, or the loom or the warehouse stool,
The larger thought will inspire the stroke of the pen or the tool."
—Central Christian Advocate.

For Daily Reading.

- M., May 1. Perfect by striving. Heb. 5:5-9.
T., May 2. Strengthened by trial. 1 Pet. 1:6-9.
W., May . Strengthened by fighting. Eph. 6:10-13.
T., May 4. Resistance strengthens. 1 Cor. 10:6-13.
F., May 5. Comrades of Christ. Heb. 3:12-16.
S., May 6. Striving for crowns. 2 Tim. 4:5-8.
Sun., May 7. Topic—The making of a Christian: his exercise. Jas. 1:22-27. (Consecration meeting.)

When one at the end of his pilgrimage can sit down and feel that he has at least conquered himself he may know that life has not been wasted, though this may have been his only victory. To bring one's own soul home triumphantly is, by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, an achievement that will bring joy into the presence of the angels and felicity unspeakable to the victor.

Before we climb the mountains in search of Opportunity, let us carefully examine the dust at our feet and see if God has not hidden it there.