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Christian Standard.

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SALUTATORY!

In presenting the first number of *The Christian Standard* to the religious public, we suppose that it will be considered necessary for us, in accordance with the time-honored custom, to make our official bow, by placing before our readers, our *raison d'être*, as well as our plans for the future of the paper. We prefer, however, to let the paper speak for itself, in its present and in its subsequent issues. Let us simply state that, although as its name indicates, this paper will be under Congregational control, still it is our intention to keep its columns of such a character, that it may find its way and be read with interest and profit in any Christian family. It will be "Evangelical always," we trust, but "Sectarian never!" Its corps of contributors will include the names of many prominent clergymen and writers of the different Evangelical denominations. Its editorial columns will be devoted to the discussion of those plain practical truths which relate to the daily life of the Christian, and to such of the questions of the day as are of interest to the Church of Christ. This paper has also been adopted by the Young Men's Christian Association of St. John as the medium of their communication with the public, and it will contain each month an article by some member of one of the Associations of the Lower Provinces, together with a synopsis of their work.

With this simple word of introduction, we send our paper forth as a preacher of the cross. "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," is its motto—presenting Him as an all-sufficient Saviour will be its mission.

God grant that the *Christian Standard* may be so permeated by the spirit of Christ that, "like the diamond, it will cast its lustre in every direction,—like a torch, the more it is shaken the more it will shine,—like a healing herb, the harder it is pressed, the sweeter will be its fragrance."

May He in whose name it has been prayerfully undertaken

"Forgive it if it fail in truth,
And in His wisdom, make it wise."

LEARN TO SAY "NO!"

It is only a simple monosyllable, one of the shortest words in every language, and yet one which persons of all nations find it difficult to pronounce. Neglecting to say "No" has entailed much embarrassment, distress and crime upon mankind since the time that our first parents failed

thus to answer the tempter in the garden of Eden down to the present day. If we inquire into the sources of human misery—if we study the first beginnings of those crimes which are daily brought before us in our morning newspapers, by tracing back an effect to its first cause, we will find that in almost every instance they originated by neglecting to say "No." A young man, for instance, leaves the seclusion of his boyhood's home—the halloved influence of Christian parents, and journeys into a far country. Here he is met by gay companions, who with flattering references to this beautiful world, and the promise he gives of having a high place in its favor, seek to influence him to join them in their dissipation. They sneer at his homespun cloth—at his graceless movements, and assure him that by joining their number he will lead the life of a wild gazelle. The hot blood at first courses to his cheeks at the blasphemous manner with which they refer to his mother's God. He knows that it is wrong for him to join them—that they ought to be resisted, and yet he cannot muster courage enough to say "No!" He goes with them—night after night finds him in their company, participating in what Shakespeare calls "the riot of the tipsy bacchanals." Mother's tear-stained Bible lies where she placed it in his trunk, unopened, forgotten. Loving letters from home remain unanswered. Step by step he perseveres in his course of sin, sinking lower and lower in his own respect, and in the judgment of the world, until at last he breathes out his miserable existence, "unwept, unhououred, and unsung;" all because at the first proposal of the tempter he had not the moral courage to say "No!"

Defaulters are not, as we sometimes think, products of the nineteenth century, caused by men elevated to public offices being suddenly exposed to great temptations. They are one and all originated when, in that defaulter's boyhood, he was tempted to purloin a trifle, a few pennies perhaps, and failed to respond "No!" Drunkards, too, are all the result of not replying "No"—when asked to take the first glass—and even that loathsome wretch, languishing in prison upon his miserable pallet of straw, might now have been (God's noblest work) "an honest man," had not his mother lacked the moral strength with which to frame that simple monosyllable, "No!" when asked to grant him an improper indulgence in his childhood.

If the abuse of this little word prove so dangerous, we should be careful when and how we employ it, even as one who is near a magazine of gunpowder needs to take care of sparks. The bad habit too often formed in childhood of thoughtlessly answering in the affirmative, clings to us in after life with the same tenacity that a barnacle clings to the keel of a ship. How often when we receive a courteous invitation from a friend or neighbor, do our lips, from force of habit, frame a pretty little speech "of the pleasure with which we would respond, but"—when perhaps we had no desire to accept the invitation. A simple "thank you" would have been sufficient, and we need not have been rude or lost our self-respect. Are you asked to participate in a questionable amusement—one that you think may lessen your influence as a Christian? Learn to say "No." Remember that a consistent Christian life is the only Bible many of the world ever read, and the copy you present to them ought not to be defaced.

Have you a desire to arise in the meeting of prayer and testify to the love of Christ, and does the tempter suggest "that you have not the gift of utterance, and it is therefore not your duty?" Learn to say "No!"

Are you anxious in regard to the salvation of your soul, and does the tempter urge you to drown your anxiety in worldly frivolity? Learn to say "No,"—and not only to say it, but to mean what you say, and then to stand by what you mean.

Now there are some people who never can say "No," unless they are in a passion. They are easy, affable and courteous, willing to respond in the affirmative to so many demands made upon them that it would soon, almost physically as well as morally, be impossible for them to refuse; and yet at times they startle those who know them best by uttering a blunt, emphatic "No!" This, too, they call "firmness," and enlarging upon the fact of there being occasions when a man must be blunt and disagreeable, they misquote Solomon, by adding, "There's a time to be firm."

This manner of saying "No" is of course all wrong. Then again there are others, persons of dyspeptic temperaments, who are always saying "No," but who are actuated by mere ill-humor. While others, men of more financial ability than principle, instead of considering what they ought to say—what they are bound by a higher law to respond—are always wondering "whether or not it will be to their interest to refuse." Let us not be governed by either of these three motives, but let us resist all improper solicitations from a sense of duty. No matter what the so-called "customs of society" demand—no matter how much the world may jeer at us and call us fanatics—let us be our duty to say "No," let us learn to say "No," let us be Lord Jesus for strength, and remembering that

"Every word man's lips have uttered
Echoes in God's skies."

-WORK!

"And gave to every man his work."

How often we meet people who, after the first glow of their love for Christ has passed away, wonder why it is that they have so soon grown cold, and in a measure indifferent. The cause of their coldness, however, it is not difficult to surmise, for the grand secret of a healthy growth in grace is to be found in constant occupation for the Master, and since their conversion, perhaps, they have been doing literally nothing for Him. They have ignored the fact that to be safe and happy, and consistent as a Christian, one must have something to do—something which is specific in aim and intent, and in the doing of which one would have brisk occupation for mind, and heart, and hand. When our first parent was placed in Eden he was not permitted to live in idleness; but he was required, as necessary to his happiness, to employ himself in the garden where he was placed. A law of labor was then instituted, and that law of labor has never been repealed. It is stamped indelibly upon all nature! God says to all created things, "Perform your allotted task and live; refuse to do so, and death will be the inevitable consequence. The human soul, too, cannot remain in a state of absolute inactivity. It may, like the butterfly, employ itself upon trifles; it may sin by doing that which is forbidden, but it must, of its very nature, employ itself upon some object. And the religion of the Lord Jesus, recognizing this constituted necessity, "gives to every man his work."

Is it many months or years since you first found the Saviour, and are you conscious that you are not growing in grace? Do you sigh as you think of the past,—of your "first love," and like those to whom we referred here, "wonder why it is that you have become cold, while others have left the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and gone on to perfection!"

Seek some avenue of work for Jesus, and you will no longer complain. Act as you do in your business. Do not wait for a task to come to you, but choose some sphere of usefulness, where you may exercise your peculiar talents for the Master; and then give yourself prayerfully to the work until you have accomplished something for Him, not waiting until you can do some great thing; bear some heavy cross, for as good George Herbert quaintly puts it:—