

Hints on Christian Work.

PERSONAL WORK.

In these days we appoint committees, hold conventions, and organize societies. They seem to be indispensable, and there are many great purposes that can only thus be accomplished.

But is there not a danger of divided responsibility, when it comes to the great business of *saving souls*? Is not the individual too often swallowed up in the society or in the church? Good people often talk about the need of having their church revived, and yet do very little to revive themselves. Christ commands His disciples now as much as He ever did, to let their lights shine in the world; but is there not danger that each Christian may forget that he or she is the bearer of a lamp? And if that lamp be well filled with grace, and its light be lovingly thrown on one sinner's path, more good will be accomplished than by a whole torchlight procession out on parade. Immortal souls do not go to heaven or hell by regiments; they go one by one, and they must be saved one by one.

The process of saving is also, to a great degree, an individual process. In battle it is said that only about one bullet out of a hundred brings down a man. A powerful and pungent sermon may be heard by a thousand people, and yet only half a dozen souls may be brought under conviction of sin; and those souls must be dealt with *face to face* by the pastor or some other intelligent spiritual guide. Mr. Moody has often said that his most effective work is done in the inquiry room when he gets into what the Scotchman called "close grups" with an awakened sinner.

When I look back over my own ministerial experience, I see now that a large part of the soul-converting work was done by personal conversation. For example, I met lately with a veteran Christian who has been for nearly forty years a zealous member of the Church, and I recalled to him the evening on which I had made him a pastoral visit. On that evening a long talk with him had not produced much impression; but before I left he took me up into the nursery to see his rosy children in their cribs. As we stood looking at the sleeping little cherubs, I said to him, "My friend, what sort of a father are you going to be to these children? Are you going to lead them towards heaven or—the other way?" That arrow lodged; it was blessed by the Holy Spirit to his conversion. At the next communion season he was at the Master's table. Preaching to him in his pew had not brought him to a decision; the preaching he needed was *face to face*. If pastors will go among their people, they will discover that there is an unbolted door in almost everybody's heart if we ask the Holy Spirit to show us where to find it. —*Dr. Cuyler.*

ON LEADING A PRAYER-MEETING.

The following hints from the *Golden Rule* on leading a C. E. Meeting, will apply equally well to the congregational prayer meeting.

"Do not carry the meeting yourself. Lead it."

If the meeting has not been on your heart, your heart will not be in the meeting.

One word fitly spoken is better than an erudite address.

Do not "make a speech." The prayer meeting is the place for the communion of saints, and not your eloquence, but your heart experience is wanted.

Have a definite plan, but let it be so flexible that it can be altered at any moment if the spirit of the meeting makes a change desirable.

Have several of the most spiritual members promise to continue in silent prayer throughout the service for the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Lead the meeting, but be willing to let the meeting lead you.

Be ready with a verse of Scripture to direct the service, should thoughts wander.

Secure an organist who is a good musician, but a better Christian.

Do not exhaust the subject with your opening remarks. Better that a dozen members should discuss the subject poorly than that the leader should preach about it ably.

Be humble. If you seek to make a reputation for yourself, you will make no reputation for Christ.

Go in the spirit of prayer if you would stand in the spirit of Christ,

Be yourself. Let your true nature speak. Only arrows from the heart's quiver ever reach the mark."—*Scr.*

A DUMB SUPERINTENDENT.

The time for opening had come. The superintendent tapped the bell without uttering a word. The chorister instantly rose and led the singing. Another tap of the bell brought another man to his feet, who read a portion of God's Word. At a third tap prayer was offered, and so all the exercises went on without the superintendent uttering a word.

After the session was ended, a visitor said to one of the teachers: "Things move along very quietly here. I notice that the school got to the study of the lesson very soon."

"That is what we come here for—to study the lesson out of God's Word," he replied.

"I noticed, also, that your superintendent did not say a word during the entire service."

"He can't," replied the teacher; "he is dumb! We elected him because he couldn't talk, and we have plenty of time now to study the lesson, which our school thinks is the most important thing. The last superintendent talked the school nearly to death."—*S. S. Review of Reviews.*