

of enemy, who is free? No human being can live a life so true, so fair, so pure as to be beyond the reach of malice, or immune from the poisonous emanations of envy. The insidious attacks against one's reputation, the louthsome innuendoes, slurs, half-lies by which jealous mediocrity seeks to ruin its superiors, are like those insect parasites that killed the heart and life of a mighty oak. So cowardly is the method, so stealthy the shooting of the poisoned thorns, so insignificant the separate acts in their seeming, that one is not on guard against them. It is easier to dodge an elephant than a microbe.

In London they have just formed an Anti-Scandal League. The members promise to combat in every way in their power "the prevalent custom of talking scandal, the terrible and unending consequences of which are not generally estimated."

Scandal is one of the crimes of the tongue, but it is only one. Every individual who breathes a word of scandal is an active stockholder in a society for the spread of moral contagion. He is instantly punished by nature by having his mental eyes dimmed to sweetness and purity, and his mind deadened to the sunlight and glow of charity. There is developed a wondrous, ingenious perversion of mental vision by which every act of others is explained and interpreted from the lowest possible motives. They become like certain carrion flies, that pass lightly over acres of rose gardens to feast on a piece of putrid meat. They have developed a keen scent for the foul matter upon which they feed.

There are pillows wet by sobs; there are noble hearts broken in the silence whence comes no cry of protest; there are gentle, sensitive natures seared and warped; there are old-time friends separated and walking their lonely ways with hope dead and memory but a pang: there are cruel misunderstandings that make all life look dark—these are but a few of the sorrows that come from the crimes of the tongue.

A man or woman may lead a life of honesty and purity, battling bravely for what they hold dearest, so firm and sure of the rightness of their life that they never think for an instant of the diabolic ingenuity that makes evil and evil report where naught but good really exists. A few words lightly spoken by the tongue of slander, a significant expression of the eyes, a cruel shrug of the shoulders, with a pursing of the lips—and then friendly hands grow cold, the accustomed smile is displaced by a sneer, and one stands alone and aloof with a dazed feeling of wonder at the vague, intangible something that has caused it all.

For this craze for scandal sensational newspapers of to-day are largely responsible. Each newspaper is not one tongue, but a thousand or a million tongues, telling the same foul story to as many pairs of listening ears. The vultures of sensationalism scent the carcass of immorality afar off. From the uttermost parts of the earth they collect the sin, disgrace and folly of humanity, and

show them bare to the world. They do not even require facts, for morbid memories and fertile imaginations make even the worst of the world's happenings seem 'ame when compared with their monstrosities of invention. These stories, and the discussions they excite, develop in readers a cheap, shrewd power of distortion of the acts of all around them.

If a rich man gives a donation to some charity, they say, "He is doing it to get his name talked about—to help his business." If he gives it anonymously, they say, "Oh, its some millionaire who is clever enough to know that refraining from giving his name will pique curiosity, he will see that the public is informed later." If he does not give to charity, they say: "Oh, he's stingy with his money, of course, like the rest of the millionaires." To the vile tongue of gossip and slander virtue is ever deemed but a mask, noble ideals but a pretense, generosity a bribe.

The man who stands above his fellows must expect to be the target for the envious arrows of their inferiority. It is part of the price he must pay for his advance. One of the most detestable characters in all literature is Iago. Envious of the promotion of Cassio above his head, he hated Othello. His was one of those low natures that become absorbed in sustaining his dignity, just as Spain to-day talks of "preserving her honor"—forgetting it has so long been dead that even embalming could not preserve it. Day by day Iago dropped his poison; day by day did subtle resentment and studied vengeance distil the poison of distrust and suspicion into more powerfully insidious doses. With a mind wonderfully concentrated by the blackness of his purpose, he wove a network of circumstantial evidence around the pure-hearted Desdemona, and then murdered her vicariously, by the hand of Othello. Her very simplicity, confidence, innocence and artlessness made Desdemona the easier mark for Iago.

Iago still lives in the hearts of thousands, who have all his despicable meanness without his cleverness. The constant dropping of their lying words of malice and envy have in too many instances at last worn away the noble reputation of their superiors.

To sustain ourselves in our own hasty judgments we sometimes say, as we listen, and accept without investigation, the words of these modern Iagos: "Well, where there is so much smoke, there must be some fire." Yes, but the fire may be only the fire of malice, the incendiary firing of the reputation of another by the lighted torch of envy, thrown into the innocent facts of a life of superiority.—*Saturday Evening Post.*

Before we can work for God effectually, we must wait for him patiently. As the apostles did so must we. They tarried for his presence, his peace, his power—then they preached. We shall conquer if we go in the irresistible power of the love of God shed abroad in the hearts of those who have obeyed him. The previous waiting will give quality to the subsequent working. Let our working hours be interspersed by frequent waiting hours. Stillness gives strength. The unseen world must be made real to us by the development of the spiritual sense in waiting, if, by working, we are to conquer the men who favor no other god than that of the world which is revealed to them by the natural sense.—*Exchange.*

WINNING SOULS.

Among the many blessed and profitable lessons to be derived from the conversation of Jesus with the woman at the well is the lesson of soul-winning.

1. From the example of Christ we learn the lesson of *wayside work*. "He must needs go through Samaria." On this journey, apparently by accident, the Master found work to do. Resting by the wayside, too, can find opportunity often of doing good. Such work, however, requires the greatest possible tact.

2. We see the value, in this conversation, of *individual work*—that is of work for one soul. We are usually after the multitudes, but this conversation speaks louder than words of the value of dealing singly with people. A heap of empty bottles are before you; they are not filled by turning the hose upon them as they lie together in the heap. You must take them up, one by one, and fill them. Christian work in regard to converting men is done that way, too. Not all can speak to a thousand, but most workers can deal with one. And "a pistol at a man's breast scares him worse than a cannon five miles away."

3. We learn the power of *skilful work*. With what wonderful tact the Saviour approached this sinner. He gave her something to do. A word to the wise is sufficient. He removed her prejudice. He removed obstacles. He talked to her when the disciples were not present. He led her to conviction. He dealt with her kindly. He aroused her interest. He won her by telling her of things higher and holier. Oh, for more wisdom in winning souls.

4. We can learn the lesson of *practical work*. The woman was constantly endeavoring to turn aside to questions of controversy and opinion. Christ kept in view her repentance. Wise evangelists have no time in a meeting for untaught things. Do not, fellow-workers, be switched off on any side-track. Let Christian science and spiritualism, etc., alone. A man ought to be filled with a burning desire to hide behind the cross, so that he can preach Christ's gospel so sweetly that men will be led to repentance and gloriously saved.

5. We have a hint here that a *changed life* is the best argument in favor of Christianity. Christianity attested by its fruits is unanswerable. A shrewd preacher was right when he said, "that the living Christian is the world's Bible." There are very many outside the church that never read or look at any other. The Master's own challenge is, "by their fruits ye shall know them." To be sure this was first said of religious teachers, but it is a general principle, and can be applied in a general way. People once disputed what Robert Fulton affirmed in regard to propelling vessels by steam, but nobody doubts now that a Cunarder can cross the Atlantic Ocean between Sundays. Men once laughed at Morse and Field as sanguine visionaries; no man laughs now at the sub-ocean cable. Lame men healed and abandoned women saved is the unanswerable argument for Christianity. True science judges causes by results. Common folk are moved by plain, practical arguments. No unbeliever can refute a cheerful, courageous, and consistent Christian life. No lie is of the truth. To-day the world's sorest need is not miracles but warm-hearted Christ-like men and women. "And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testifies, he told me all things that ever I did."—*James Small, in Christian Standard.*