

the kingdom of heaven." What right has any man to reverse His decision? Again, the Master said to Nicodemus, when asked how can a man be born again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." These verily, verily, of our Saviour are very emphatic, and show that, though the application of water is necessary as the sign or symbol, to be born of the Spirit can alone make us children of God. In a former chapter it is said, "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name." This willing reception of Christ into the heart by those of adult age is necessary, while infants, as irresponsible, are in God's sight the same as believers, for of them Jesus said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

While Christ appointed baptism as the distinguishing badge of His earliest followers, He evidently did not make it an absolute requisite to salvation, as in the case of the thief upon the cross. Neither did His apostles; for when the Philippian jailer came in trembling penitence with the cry, "Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas simply directed him to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and he should be saved. The faith was an absolute necessity, and he and his household were afterwards baptized as belonging to the household of Christ.

How dangerous the fallacy that leads men to live with complacency lives of sin and worldliness, lulled to security by the thought that, having been baptized, their salvation is assured. This nominal discipleship by no means constitutes a Christian, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

AUXILIARY WORK.

HOW TO OBTAIN AND RETAIN MEMBERS, ETC., ETC.

BY MRS. W. HAMILTON, LONDON.

IN undertaking to read a paper on this important subject, I do not wish to be understood as speaking from the standpoint of "one who had already attained, either were already perfect," nor as one representing an Auxiliary in which all the difficulties apprehended have been overcome, or in which the principles of success here outlined have been reduced to practice; for, I must confess, that since commencing to think on this subject, with a view to public discussion, I have been almost surprised at the number of ways which have presented themselves to me; in which, in our meetings and general work, we might have made greater progress.

How to increase the attendance. Perhaps a synonymous question, so far as it concerns that portion of our membership whose defection raises the question, would be, "How can we make our meetings more attractive?" That putting of the case could not apply to all our membership, because the fact that we have Auxiliaries at all, implies that there are at least a few in each one whose hearts are so full of love for the Master, and a sense of obligation to Him, that they are willing to do even unpleasant, distasteful and unattractive things. It is for this class, then, to consider, in their desire to multiply the number of workers, how others may be led to take a deeper interest in the work.

In prescribing then, I would say first, let there be enthusiasm. By this I do not mean mob enthusiasm, begotten of frantic appeals, or intended only to serve the purpose of a day, but that enthusiasm in the work of Christ, which they alone can know who, sitting at His feet, have individually asked Him the question, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" and who, by patient and prayerful search-

ing of His word, have learned His will concerning them in their relation to Himself and to the rest of the world. Without this enthusiasm, any missionary meeting can be little better than a make-believe; with it, no meeting should be positively dull.

Secondly, let us do Christ's work in Christ's spirit. Human nature is the same to-day as when our Saviour trod the earth in person, and mistakes made by those who loved and followed Him then, are mistakes liable to be repeated by those who love and follow Him now. When mothers brought their children for His blessing, His disciples, in their zeal to promote His kingdom, and with their inadequate conception of His spirit, rebuked what seemed to them an intrusion. When starting upon His triumphal march the fervent appeal of the blind men was likewise sought to be hushed by those who thought they did Him service. When James and John, two of those who lived most closely to Him, asked liberty to call down the fire from heaven upon those who they thought were slighting their Master, they came to see that they were far from comprehending the large-hearted principles of His kingdom. Had He not heard and indignantly rebuked the interference with the children; had His ears, quick with intense sympathy, not detected above the din of His triumphal march, the voices of the blind men; or had the fire from heaven come down to consume those who were not up to the disciples' standard of hospitality; the convictions of the blind men, of the mothers, and of the friends of the consumed, as to the nature of His kingdom, would probably have been much the same as exists to-day in the minds of many whose notions of Christ and His kingdom have been prejudiced by the bearing of those who have, perhaps honestly, aimed at doing His work, but have been unfortunate in their interpretation of His spirit.

These observations may seem uncalled for, spoken in relation to our meetings, but Christian societies have, before to-day, been jeopardized, and much of their work rendered nugatory, by the outcropping of petty jealousies, by carping criticisms, and the mistaken assumption that effort in some line of general Christian work, would atone for present neglect of Christian sweetness; or that it rendered insignificant or needless the cultivation of personal Christian graces. We can all think of women of such rare attainments in Christian culture, that the very atmosphere around them seems to invite to Christ, and an hour in whose company is nothing short of a benediction. Let us aim at a high degree of excellence on this line, and the problem of attractiveness in our meetings will largely solve itself. It is not alone in our meetings that the manifestation of this spirit can be made mightily available as a source of attraction. As we go out and in at our work of looking up absentees, and seeking new members, let us remember that the religion of Christ is a religion of humanity; that while He died for *all* mankind, and intended His religion for the masses, yet much of His own individual effort was in behalf of individual souls; and as we find hearts needing Christian comfort and consolation, we will find that the best interests of God's kingdom, both here and in heathendom, will be served by our ministration of these things. If we attract to ourselves as ambassadors for Christ, doubtless we will attract to Christ and His work. Without tenderness, we lack power; without sweetness, we shall be feeble indeed; but with Christliness, the Holy Ghost working through us, will amaze us with the rapidity of His conquest.

Next (taking the succeeding points in the order of our order of business), let our meetings begin promptly at the hour appointed, and let promptness characterize the conduct of them all through. Where busy women make sacrifices to come, dawdling must be next thing to sinful, and is,