

However correct in purpose he may be counted, it looks as if his word was not to be relied on. The promise may be of new books for the library, or of a last month's lesson paper to replace a lost one, for illing, or of a collection envelope, or of the repair of a broken seat or window, or of a word to the pastor, or to the parents of a scholar, or of information on a Bible, theme, or of the address of a Sunday-school publisher, or of any one of the many matters in which the Superintendent's aid is commonly invoked—whatever it is, if a teacher or a scholar thinks it worth while to ask about it, and the Superintendent consents to make a promise of action, it cannot be safely slighted. A sacred pledge rests on it. The Superintendent must keep his word or be proved so far unfaithful. Some Superintendents, feeling the importance of this thing, are careful to make an immediate note of every such promise given to a scholar or teacher, that they may not fail in the performance of one jot or tittle thereof.

A Chance for Service:

BY REV. WAYLAND HOYT, NEW YORK.

ALMOST the last command which Jesus gave was this, "Feed my lambs." It is well enough to think what a large opportunity for Christian service must open for any one of us through obedience to this command.

John Falk, of Weimar, was a great Christian. It was a terrible time in Weimar. Napoleon the Great was scathing Europe. The dark nights of winter were lighted with burning homesteads. Almost all the men in the little duchy were driven off to the wars and killed. Plague and famine were raging. Orphans were numbered by the thousands. In one small village sixty orphans wept both parents. John Falk himself had a brood of six sweet children. He could not keep the pestilence from smiting them. Four out of the six were carried off, and as he declared, he buried with them the best part of his own life in their graves. But what did John Falk do? Uselessly bewail his fate and sit in sackcloth with folded hands? Call God cruel, and declare

that Providence was a grand mistake? No. John Falk was a great Christian. He heard this command of Christ, "Feed my lambs." He would obey it. He gathered the homeless children off the streets and waysides. He took them for his own. "Come in," he cried, "God has taken my four angels and spared me that I might be your father." And out of that beginning sprang the "Inner Mission" of Germany, which in orphanages and training schools has spread the kindly roof of Christian homes over thousands of homeless children, and been a large element in making Protestant Germany the mighty nation she has become. Now, of course, I do not mean to say that we ought all of us to do, or that we all can do as John Falk did. Our necessity is not the same. Our circumstances are different. But I do mean to say that we all of us have a chance for Christian service just there where John Falk found his.

We are very sentimental in our religion. As Falk himself once wrote, "We all like the glory on Tabor, but we cannot bear to spend our nights in Golgotha." We glow with fervours of feeling. We rejoice with meditative enthusiasm. We are stirred by sermons and lifted in emotion by the solemn voices of our sacred songs. Then in a vague and aimless way we go forth in longing toward some large service for the Lord. We dream, perhaps, that some day we may do some great thing for him. And then we straightway forget that the chances for the highest service are just as numerous as are the little children about our way. Washington Irving tells somewhere, a story about a man who determined that he would jump over a great mountain rather than walk over. So he took a run of three miles to gather impetus, and when he reached the mountain could only sit down and rest having no strength to jump. So we sometimes gather ourselves in desire and emotion for some huge and impossible service, and uselessly exhausting ourselves refuse quietly to walk into the daily opportunities opening along our way. It is worth the learning to be willing to walk where we cannot jump.

Christ said, "Feed my lambs." Quietly feed them then. The children are all