



## Section of Social Service

"Look Up, Lift Up."

### The Ministry of the Hand

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In considering how we may best improve this New Year as it passes, it is well that we should not forget the ministry of the human hand.

Of all means of doing good, none perhaps has been more blessed than this convenient agency. As a sign and seal of friendship, what is more assuring than the warm clasp of a loving hand? Words and looks may both deceive, but the hand carries in its clasp its unmistakable assurance. When Jehu, the warrior, was exterminating the worshippers of Baal and was desirous of knowing whether Jehonadab was in sympathy with his cause, he requested him to assure him by the shaking of his hand (2 Kings 10, 15). And so along the past, the hand clasp has been not only a sign and seal of friendliness and friendship, but a constant means of preventing the little differences of opinion or misunderstandings that sometimes arise, from alienating the affections or estranging the sympathies of those who would ordinarily be the closest friends.

Then the hand is a wonderful interpreter of feelings and sentiments that lie too deep for verbal expression. A degree of friendship may be indicated by a hand-clasp, that would be utterly inexpressible in words. The mother's firm clasp of her boy as he leaves the protective home circle for an isolated life among strangers in a distant city, has more in it than he can ever realize or forget.

In the sick room the patient's hand may assure of gratitude for the friendly call and solicitude that would not be possible through words. In the hour of bereavement when one feels life among strangers of formal words, the hand may convey assurances of sympathy and prayer, that could not otherwise find expression, and so in these various ways we may each lend a helping hand as we journey through life in this year of 1910.

In temporal and spiritual things there are many who grow discouraged with themselves and their slow advancement. Every day they are busy with the world, engrossed with business, oppressed with cares, beset with trials, harassed with disappointments, crossed, vexed and perplexed in a thousand various ways. A little coolness or indifference on our part may be the straw that shall break their backs beneath the burden of discouragement, or their cherry look and fervent hand-clasp may be the first sign of mercy that shall lift them out of their Slough of Despond, and inspire them once more with the hopefulness of success.

In the Christian life, as well as in the life of business, many a one has been helped over insuperable difficulties by the kindly hand, extended by a trusted friend. Christ's life was full of the ministry of the hand, as when he anointed the eyes with clay, or took the little maiden by the hand and said "Talitha cumi, I say unto thee arise." (Mark 5, 41.)

Among the unconverted, the hand may also have a welcome place in inviting guests to the Master's table. In many a wayward heart, there is a latent longing for a better life. No one knows it but the poor, trembling one, who fears to tell his longing to his nearest friend. A hundred obstacles present themselves when he thinks of becoming a Christian. Some of them come from the indifference of

professing Christians, and in the midst of these difficulties, a kindly hand clasp, significant of our purpose and prayer to win him for Christ, may more than overcome all other discouragements, and be instrumental in securing a soul for the Master's service.

In addition then to our consecration and earnest prayer, and kindest words as means of doing good, in our ministry of love, let us not forget the Helping Hand. Toronto.

### The Power of Song

The following incident, as described by an Allegheny, Pa., newspaper, vividly illustrates the wonderful effect often produced by a Gospel song overheard by a chance passer-by. The report is given as follows:

"The congregation of Christ Protestant Episcopal Church, Union Avenue, Allegheny, the Rev. Robert Meech, rector, was startled yesterday morning by a sensational supplement to the morning service. The church was well filled and devout worshippers responded to the service as read by the rector. The reading had been concluded, and the rector was about to make the usual announcements of future services, when an incident occurred such as old Christ Church had never dreamed of, out of the usual line in a church of this denomination; it was, nevertheless, marked in its effect, and will never be forgotten by those present.

"In the fourth pew from the front aisle of the church sat a neatly-dressed woman of intellectual face, apparently about thirty years of age. Her presence as a stranger had been noticed by many, and her deep, tearful interest in the service had been quietly commented on by those who occupied the adjoining pews. At the point mentioned she rose to her feet, and, struggling with emotion, began to speak. The startled congregation was all attention, and she was allowed to proceed. Rapidly and eloquently she told of her going out of the church and her return to it. In graphic words she painted the hideousness of sin and the joys of a pure life, and as she spoke, men and women gave way to their emotions and listened breathlessly to the end of the narration.

"I was christened in this church," she said, "and attended Sunday School in the basement, when good old Dr. Paige was rector. My mother was a devout member here, and taught me the right way. At the age of fifteen I deserted my home, and married an actor. For a number of years I followed the profession, leading such a life as naturally accompanies it. In dramatic circles, in variety business, and in the circus, I spent those godless years.

"About two years ago I was in the city of Chicago. One afternoon I was on my way to Ferris Wheel Park to spend the afternoon in revelry, when I happened on the open-air meeting which the Epworth League of Grace Methodist Episcopal Church was conducting on North Park Street. I stopped through curiosity, as I believed, to listen; but I know now that God arrested my footsteps there. They were singing 'Saved by Grace,' and the melody impressed me. Recollections of my childhood days came trooping into my soul, and I remembered that in all the years of my ab-

sence, my mother, until her death, nine years ago, had been praying for me.

"I was converted, and falling on my knees on the curbstone, I asked the Father's pardon. Then and there I received it, and I left the place with a peace that has never forsaken me. I gave up my business at once, and have lived for His service ever since. I have been but a few days in this city. Last night I visited the Home Mission, and the Lord told me that I must come here and testify what He had done for me. I have not been in this building for many years, but it seems only yesterday since I left it. I have been sitting in the pew directly opposite the one once occupied by my mother and myself, and I feel her presence to-day. I could not resist the impulse to give this testimony. The Lord sent me here."

"The congregation was profoundly impressed. The rector descended from the chancel, and, approaching the speaker, with tears in his eyes, bade her God-speed. The service went on. At its conclusion many members of the congregation shook hands with the stranger, and told of their impressions. A stranger might have imagined himself in a Methodist Episcopal church, so intense was the feeling. The strange visitor departed with a sense of duty done. All she said was: 'I feel that the Lord Jesus and mother have been here.'"

### "Relation of Sports to the Development of Character"

Our characters are ourselves. And yet, as the subject implies, none of us spring into being fully formed and armed for our work in life—We are growths rather than creations,—but growths from the created germs. Life is a character making business. Everyone has tendencies and possibilities which know no limitations, which cannot be bound; and by facing and fighting the battles of life and going on conquering and to conquer we may develop a character that truly reflects the Christ life even as Christ Himself was the character of God.

The Christ character manifests itself in love, service, and sacrifice.

Generally speaking "sports" means our outdoor games, such as baseball, football, lacrosse, basket-ball, tennis, cricket, skating, curling and hockey. If the supreme object in life is the development of Christ-like characters that manifest themselves in love, service and sacrifice, then anything included in sports which does not tend in that direction, has no place in life, and should have no place in practice.

Sport is sometimes described and considered as a mere pastime. But this is a wrong conception. There are no pastimes in God's plan of life. We are here for a purpose, and the time that is spent in sports should be spent with that purpose in view. Time spent unnecessarily in sport is wasted time, and so we get things out of proportion. We skate or curl or play hockey or baseball or tennis every night in the week, but find it difficult to attend our League or prayer meetings, or to enrich our minds by reading good books, or to visit the fatherless and the widow, or to minister to the sick. I am not condemning enthusiasm for sports, but we must not get things so much out of proportion by emphasizing the lesser and being indifferent to the greater duties.

Sports are necessary to health, and health to our highest development of character, or to the life of love, service and sacrifice. Health means wholeness—a man is healthy when he is whole, complete, unimpaired by any disorder, moral, mental, or physical. If we would be healthy in

"It's no use singing 'sunshine' if your life is all moonshine."—Gen. Booth.