

WHAT THE HANDS FIND TO DO.

By no means all of the missionary work is reported in the missionary magazines, numerous though they are. Christian Work tells of a lady who was living near a town where fifty Italians came to work. She became very much distressed at the heathenish way in which they lived, for she discovered that they never went to church, and that the nearest Roman Catholic priest had not taken the trouble to look them up. Most of them could speak no English, and she could speak no Italian, so she was at a loss to know how to help them. Discovering that almost all of them could read in their native tongue, she purchased copies of the New Testament in Italian, and gave one to each man. It was not long before one of the leaders came to her and asked if there was a church where they could go and hear that Book read. He said most of the men were reading it, many of them with much interest. She consulted with others, and they arranged to have a man come from the neighboring city and preach to them in Italian. The men were so interested and grateful that other meetings followed, until now the church has what might be called an Italian annex, and the results of the work are most gratifying. It is needless to say that the priest is now indignant over what he considers an encroachment upon his territory.

A PRAYER.

O Lord, let Thy blessing be with us, then our poverty shall be wealth, our failure in life shall be our truest success, and all our victories shall be purged of vanity and cleansed of all earthliness, and shall be as crowns set upon our head by the Lord of life. Baffle every bad man, turn his counsel to confusion; when he has dug his pit, may he fall into it himself, and when his arm is stretched out to smite weakness may he never be able to take it in again. The Lord be with all good men; make them courageous, fearless, confident, resolute, and zealous, and may their way be prosperous, may every step they take elicit blessings from the hearts of men whom they help and honor and enrich. The Lord hear us in these things, seeing they are bound up in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord, and seeing that they are poured out of our hearts on Calvary, at the foot of the Cross, where prayer was never lost. Amen.

NEVER DESPAIR.

The poor old patriarch Jacob was shrouded in gloom when he wailed out, "All these things are against me!" Joseph is gone; Simeon is gone; and they have carried away also Benjamin, who bore in his boyish face the photograph of the beautiful Rachel. He calls his lot a sad one. But the returning caravan is almost in sight which brings to him the full sacks from Egypt's granaries, and the joyful invitation to go and see his long-lost Joseph as premier of Pharaoh's kingdom. His dark hour is just before the day-dawn. What he regarded as a sorrow has grown into the greatest mercy of his life. There may have been wet eyes up in that prayer-room in Jerusalem, where the little band met after their Master had left them. They were sowing in tears, to reap with joy before the next day's sun went down. Never despair of a good cause. Never despair of a great heaven-directed reform, even when the powers of hell are striving to strangle it. Never despair of a child. The one that fills you with the most solicitude and occasions your most fervent prayers may yet gladden your life with joys beyond your brightest hopes. Never despair of a soul so long as you can plead with God for that soul or strive to bring it into a view of Christ.

OVERCOME SIN.

Communion with the sinless One is the sure method of excommunicating sin. Dannecker, the German sculptor, spent eight years in producing a face of Christ; and at last wrought out one in which the emotions of love and sorrow were so perfectly blended that beholders wept as they looked upon it. Subsequently being solicited to employ his great talent on a statue to Venus, he replied, "After gazing so long into the face of Christ, think you that I can now turn my attention to a heathen goddess?"

Here is the true secret of weakness from worldly idols, the expulsive power of a new affection.

"I have heard the voice of Jesus.
Tell me nought of ought beside;
I have seen the face of Jesus,
And my soul is satisfied."

THE WIND OF SORROW.

The fire of love was burning, yet so low
That in the dark we scarce could see
its rays,

And in the light of perfect-placid days
Nothing but smoldering embers dull and slow.

Vainly, for love's delight, we sought to throw

New treasures on the pyre to make it blaze:

In life's calm and tranquil, prosperous ways

We missed the radiant heat of long ago.

Then in the night, a night of sad alarms,
Bitter with pain and black with fog of fears

That drove us trembling to each other's arms—

Across the gulf of darkness and salt tears,

Into life's calm the wind of sorrow came,
And fanned the fire of love to clearest flame.

—Henry Van Dyke, In The Century.

MAKE READY FOR HEART ROOM.

The leading idea of preparation for receiving a guest is anticipatory thoughtfulness, a consideration of what would please him when he comes. We fill his room with many small tokens of our wish that, in it, he should really feel at home. Do we ever so anticipate a visit from our Lord, and make the heart room ready for Him before He comes? Do we ever feel as Moses felt when he said, "He is my God and I will prepare Him a habitation?" Perhaps we do; but even then we are confronted with two great obstacles—first, our conscious unworthiness to receive the Lord at all, and next, our felt incompetence so to purify the house that it shall be worthy to receive Him. We are therefore forced to take refuge in the paradox, that the Lord Himself must do in us what He asks us to do and what we are unable to do. We are to cleanse the heart for Christ to dwell in it, and yet it is just his own coming into it that alone can cleanse it thoroughly. If He comes to dwell at all He must come to us, unworthy of His presence as we are; and then what our own power cannot do His power working in us will speedily do.

Our prayer must therefore be, "Lord, take my heart and cleanse it, for I cannot cleanse it myself; keep it thyself, for I cannot keep it for Thee." And He will answer the prayer. He will bring these poor sinful hearts of ours into such close fellowship with Himself that His holy nature will be transfused into ours; moment by moment we shall become larger sharers of His victory and His peace; and the hearts in which He dwells will become living temples, full of "thanksgiving and the voice of melody."—From "In the Secret of His Presence."

OBEYING CHRIST.

Some Bible Hints.

All the failure's in keeping Christ's commandments come from trying to keep them without Christ (v. 5).

There are many rewards of commandment-keeping, but there are no rewards unless Christ's love is thought reward enough (v. 10).

Can we love one another because it is commanded? No; but because we love the Commander (v. 12).

Can we be friends of Christ, that "whatsoever" standing in the way? Yes, for Christ has promised to give us "whatsoever" help we ask (v. 14).

Suggestive Thoughts.

Christ "knoweth our frame"; where He commands, obedience is always possible.

No one can heed without hearing. Obedience to Christ involves Bible study.

Christ issues no commandment that he did not obey when a mortal like ourselves.

It is not natural to us to obey good orders; we must learn to obey.

A Few Illustrations.

No command of the general is for hardship, but for victory. It is thus with Christ's commands.

A parent must issue many commandments that he cannot explain to his child, but they will be understood by and by. So with Christ.

Obedience to Christ, often repeated, becomes an instinct, as a soldier responds automatically to the word of command.

A general's commands must often reach the soldiers by way of under officers. So Christ's commands often reach us through Christ's ministers.

To Think About.

Do I understand just what Christ's commands are?

Am I doing Christ's will with my whole heart?

Is it becoming easier or harder to obey.

A Cluster of Quotations.

The virtue of paganism was strength; the virtue of Christianity is obedience. —Hare.

Obedience is not truly performed by the body of him whose heart is diseased. The shell without a kernel is not fit for store.—Saadi.

Let them obey that know how to rule. —Shakespeare.

From... obedience... and... submission spring all other virtues, as all sin does from self-opinion.—Montaigne.

DAILY READINGS

M., Oct. 1. Obedient and fruitful. Matt. 10: 18-23.
T., Oct. 2. Obedience and eternal life. Matt. 19: 16-22.
W., Oct. 3. Hearing and doing. Luke 6: 46-49.
T., Oct. 4. Watching and obeying. Luke 12: 35-40.
F., Oct. 5. Following and serving. John 12: 26-28.
S., Oct. 6. Knowing and doing. Rom. 2: 7-13.
S., Oct. 7. To be—Christ's life. X. The commandments He left us: our obedience. John 15: 1-17. (Consecration meeting.)

Christian Advocate: Many of the so-called "healers" are deceivers, and some of them are frauds. The distinction between a deceiver and a fraud in this use of the words is, a deceiver is not what he thinks he is; therefore, when he says that he is what he is not, and affirms that he does what he can not do, he does not realize that he is producing the effect of a lie. The fraud knows that he is a deceiver, and endeavors to make other people believe that he is telling or working the truth.