

WHEN "TIME APART" IS MOST NEEDED.

We most need to pray when it is hardest to pray. We most need quietness and patience when everything within us and about us is clamoring and impatient. Yet we constantly yield to the temptation of supposing that prayer will be most profitable only when we are spontaneously in the mood for it, and that time is to be given to quiet communion with God only when it is easy to devote time to this. Because so many make this mistake, there is a constant ignoring of the source of power; and most persons, waiting for a time to come which never will come, grow steadily less able to make the most of the time that is theirs. At a gathering of friends who had met for a day of quiet Bible study and prayer, one remarked that, to him, the strongest reason for the necessity of such a "quiet day" was the increasing difficulty of getting to it. The high pressure of modern life accounts for this difficulty; and that same high pressure demands in us more and more of the power that comes only from prayer and communion. The busiest man is the man who can least afford to let his business cut into his religion.—S. S. Times.

GOD'S WILL BETTER THAN ARITHMETIC.

"Greatest good to the greatest number" has a plausible sound to it; but it is never a safe guide to duty-doing. One who bases his work on that principle is likely to spread himself so thin that neither a great number nor a small will get much good from his efforts. Christ's rule was to give himself chiefly to serving one at a time. He suggested that "he that is least among you all, the same is great"; and He announced the awarding of eternal life to those who have ministered "unto one of these My brethren, even these least." Nowhere does the Bible even hint at great numbers as a test in determining one's duty. The only test a man need consider is: "Is this God's will for me?" God may call him to serve a great multitude; but when God does, He will make the duty plain by other reasons than merely the count of heads. And those who serve great numbers effectively do so by virtue of concentrating their efforts chiefly on one at a time; for the one-at-a-time method is the secret of the greatest good to the greatest number.

CALLED TO BE COMFORTERS.

Every one whose life we touch is made either stronger or weaker by contact with us. It is an awful thing to be a weakener of our fellows, a stumbling-block in their paths. Therefore it is our duty to be comforters all; for "strength-added" is what the word comfort really means. Comfort is a broader thing, at root, than merely consolation for the sorrowing. It comes from two words meaning strong, and together. Because "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me," therefore the Spirit which Christ sent to take His place with his followers is our "Comforter"—or "one called alongside of for help." Christ would have us pass this comfort on,—adding strength to every life that we touch. If we challenge our every word to or action toward our fellows, making our test-question "will it strengthen or weaken?" and resolutely bar out that which does not build up, we shall begin to be comforters indeed. And no other aim in life is worth while.—Sunday School Times.

The child of God flourishes like a palm tree, which pushes all its strength upward in one erect column without a single branch. It is a pillar with a glorious capital. It has no growth to the right or to the left, but sends all its force heavenward, and bears its fruit as near the sky as possible. Lord, fulfill this type in me!

CANADIAN PIONEER PRESBYTERIAN FOREIGN MISSIONARY.
REV. JOHN GEDDIE.

By Rev. W. F. Murray.

From good old Pictou town, in Nova Scotia, to the island of Annetum, in the New Hebrides group off the east of Australia, some 20,000 miles, was a far cry by the sailing routes of sixty years ago. Yet it was by that route, around stormy Cape Horn, that Rev. John Geddie went, nothing daunted, to his life task of evangelizing the savage cannibals, many of whose sons and daughters are now confessed followers of Christ.

Mr Geddie was born in Banff, Scotland, on the 10th April, 1815, but was brought by his parents to Pictou when an infant, and received his collegiate training in the famous Academy of that town.

With the hope that the church in the Lower Provinces might eventually be led to take up Foreign Mission work, Mr. Geddie at first accepted a call to Caledonia, P.E.I., and was inducted there on March 13th, 1838. In the very year in which he was ordained he organized a missionary society in his own congregation. His marriage to Charlotte, daughter of Dr. Alex. McDonald, of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, took place on September 21st, 1839, with the solemn compact, that, should God open the way, they should enter upon Foreign Mission work. This work Mr. Geddie felt that the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia should take up, small and poor as she then was.

How this idea was finally spread throughout the church and how she was led to embark on the enterprise,—though many were doubtful and some were opposed, is one of the most interesting chapters in our church history. Mr. Geddie's unquenchable zeal and persistence are a large part of it.

On November 30th, 1846, Mr. Geddie, his wife and two children, sailed in the brig Acadia to Boston, where, after some delay, they secured passage in a small brig bound for the Sandwich Islands. Of the six months' voyage, the doubling of the Cape, and the terrific storms encountered, Mr. Geddie has left excellent memoranda.

They were first landed at Honolulu. After a residence here of seven weeks, they obtained a passage to the Samoan group, where they were landed on the island of Futuila, already occupied by missionaries from Scotland. At a missionary council held here, it was decided that Mr. Geddie had better remain for some months to study the Samoan language, so as to be able to place Samoan teachers; and to prepare material for a house, so that, on the arrival of the London Missionary Society's vessel, he might proceed to some island of the New Hebrides group and begin his work among the heathen. Finally, the 29th July, 1848, Mr. and Mrs. Geddie landed on Annetum, which was to be the scene of their labors, their sorrows, and their joys, for well nigh a quarter of a century.

The work was truly pioneer. Not only had our first missionaries to find their passage as best they could, before the days of organized traffic and ocean liners, but they had also to find their location, and meet situations as they arose, deciding the most difficult questions with little or no opportunity of taking counsel with brethren. Literally their souls "waited only upon God."

The people of Annetum and the kindred islands were degraded savages, related in blood to the Australian negro and the Malay race—a mixture. They were cannibals, constantly at war with one another; polygamists; and very degraded. The islands produced luxuriantly, the climate was tropical, a living was easily secured; hence indolence, and

all the other vices that follow in its train, were strongly entrenched.

It was in these surroundings that Mr. Geddie began his work. Helpers were very few, from the first. The work accomplished was all the more remarkable. Preaching was begun, the language was reduced to writing, portions of the scriptures were printed, churches were built, schools were established, school books printed. Deacons, elders, teachers, and Sunday school workers, were secured from the population. War was abolished. Councils of justice were formed. Cannibalism, widow murder, theft, polygamy, infanticide, became things of the past. In brief, the island and some surrounding islands changed from naked savagery to Christianity.

Mr. Geddie's skill in preaching, teaching housebuilding, boatbuilding, printing, etc., marked him out as a man who, in civilized lands, would have been in the forefront. Added to these qualifications, he was an indefatigable worker, and a man who, much in the spirit of the disciple John, used love as his only weapon.

He won a great mastery over savage chiefs, with whom he was necessarily brought much in contact. They trusted him, and because of their trust they received his teachings and religion.

In the later days of his work, Mr. Geddie was gladdened by the arrival of faithful and zealous brother missionaries, who put the future of the mission beyond a doubt. But the heavy toll, the anxious days among many dangers, domestic griefs, and the strenuous years, had told heavily upon Dr. Geddie. On the 14th December, 1872 in his 58th year—he rested from his labors. His remains repose in the cemetery at Geelong, Australia—he had gone to Australia in feeble health to have the Old Testament printed in Annetumese.

An excellent record of his work is to be found in Dr. George Patterson's Life of Geddie. It is a thrilling story of the devotion of a life of true greatness and power to the old task of preaching the cross. There is no name that appeals in greater degree to our church in the Maritime Provinces than that of Geddie. We have now many well beloved foreign missionaries; but John Geddie was our firstborn.

Daily Bible Readings.

- M.—Dedicated to God, 1 Sam. 1: 20-28.
- T.—Saving one soul, Ezek. 33: 1-9.
- W.—An undoubted call, Ex. 3: 1-9.
- T.—Not disobedient, Acts 26: 12-23.
- F.—Praying and working, Ex. 14: 13-20.
- S.—The Islands rejoice, Ps. 97.
- Sun. Topic, Canada's Pioneer Presbyterian Foreign Missionary: Rev. John Geddie, Acts 8: 4-13.

Methodist Protestant: A sermon that is not genuine gospel is a dish with something left out. A sermon that does not bring Christ into view as a present and all-sufficient Saviour, is a dish with the most important part missing.

Central Presbyterian: The holidays have passed with their usual catalogue of crimes—committed under the influence of strong drink. A friend takes the life of his companion in revelry; a husband murders the wife whom he loves; a mere boy reddens his hands and blackens his life with unprovoked murder on the highway. These things continue to be promoted by the plea of a free country and personal liberty, liberty to make desolate homes; liberty to blast lives and wreck immortal souls! We must learn to interpose to save men from the maddening intoxicant that impels to self-destruction and the destruction of fellow-beings. May the year 1908 surpass all the years of the past in the progress of temperance reform.

*Young People's Topic, Feb. 23, 1908. Acts 8: 4-13. Rev. John Geddie.

We were not fashioned to be at home in sin.—G. H. Morrison.