

## THE CHURCH OBSERVER.

its organizations. He had heard the notices given from time to time, of meetings, but had only a vague idea of what they were aiming at. His wife went on to tell him of the feeble Sunday-school, always needing teachers; of the missionary society, always needing funds; and of The Girls' Friendly with its possibilities of usefulness, if there were more workers; of the boys' club, asking the help of any who could interest and entertain boys in the evenings. She had little bits of information about other branches of work, all feeble, because of the lack of helpers.

Then our vestryman found himself wrestling with two other questions. One was this: "Ought I not to be ashamed of myself, first of all to be so ignorant of what is going on in a parish of which I am an officer." And then, "Why do I not begin to do something?" Now when a man reaches such a questioning stage as that, it will not be long before he finds himself at work, or, rather, the work finds him. And so this vestryman found that he could go down one evening to the Girls' Friendly and entertain them with an account of a trip he made last summer to Normandy. Another time he gave the boys a treat, hired a reader to entertain them; and finally told the superintendent of the Sunday-school that some day he would take a class in the Sunday-school if there was the need.

These were some of the outward signs of that change which was taking place in his soul. Somehow or other, he was beginning to look at his position as emphatically spiritual. It was not merely an honorary post, nor were its affairs simply secular. He was not just like a member of the Board of Directors of a bank or of a business corporation. As a vestryman he was a spiritual helper in the parish. It is true that most of his work as a vestryman had to do with the care of the church property; the raising of money and attention to other things which were temporal and material; but beside and above this, all these were for spiritual ends, and were connected with duties which were not discharged by a more or less regular attendance at public services and the giving of money. He must give his best thoughts and most sincere efforts. It brought him in contact with spiritual opportunities.

When he came to consider his office thus, it loomed up before him as a position which ought

not to be entered into lightly; a position whose duties ought to be discharged conscientiously. If he were a spiritual helper, then he had something to do with lifting up the spiritual tone of the parish; he must do his part in aiding in the religious instruction of the young and in extending religious influences to outside people.

Now this change of view was shown by a change of conduct. One of the things he did was to convince the vestry that the whole attitude of the parish toward the outside world should be made more hospitable. It must show that it wanted people to come to the services. The vestry organized itself into a corps of ushers, and some of them both morning and night are found at the entrance of the church to welcome those who come. It is hard now for a stranger to get into or out of the church without some one shaking his hand and asking him to come again.

Our vestryman has also put some new life into other parish agencies. His interest in them has changed the attitude of indifference or mild contempt which some have borne hitherto toward these branches of work. He has shown that a straightforward, generous hand extended them can lift them up from their feebleness to something better.

Then, too, he has become a true helper to his clergyman, and has lifted up the hands that were growing feeble. He has helped make a better man of his minister by filling him with new courage.

There is a difference to-day in the tone of that parish, because this man has become somewhat more alive. If the reformation extends to other vestrymen; if the leading members of the parish are touched, there will be great cause for rejoicing in one parish. There is reason to hope that the reformation will extend. There was nothing peculiar in the case of this vestryman. He simply got awake. He had been asleep hitherto. He had been a vestryman after a common type. When he got awake, he saw what his office meant, and realized how high its privileges and how sacred its duties. May there be many such reformations!—*N. Y. Churchman.*

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"Sometimes the greatest heroes fall.  
Sometimes the noblest fight of all  
Is fought by those who fail."