

natural manifestations, yet no one will deny that God can and does use men in other lines of life in a most marvellous way in advancing His work.

Mr. Arthur J. Brown, in "The Foreign Missionary," states that broadly speaking, the motives which should assist us in settling this question may be classified as follows:

1. The Soul's Experience in Christ.—In proportion as this is genuine and deep, will we desire to communicate it to others. Propagation is a law of the spiritual life. The genius of Christianity is expansive. That was an exquisite touch of regenerated nature and one beautifully illustrative of the promptings of a normal Christian experience, which led Andrew, after he rose from Jesus' feet, to find first his own brother, Simon, and say unto him: "We have found the Messiah; and he brought him to Jesus." No external authority, however commanding, can take the place of this internal motive.

The man who has no religion of his own that he values of course is not interested in the effort to make it known to others. It is true, one may be simply ignorant of the content of his faith or the real character of the missionary impulse, but as a rule those who know the real meaning of the Christian experience are conscious of an over-mastering impulse to communicate it to others.

2. The World's Evident Need of Christ.—He who has knowledge that is essential to the welfare of his fellow men is under solemn obligation to convey that knowledge to them. It makes no difference who those men are, or where they live, or whether they are conscious of their need, or how much inconvenience or expense he may incur in reaching them. The fact that he can help them is reason why he should help them. This is an essential part of the foreign missionary impulse. We have the revelation of God that is potential of a civilization that benefits man, an education that fits him for higher usefulness, a scientific knowledge that enlarges his powers, a medical skill that alleviates his sufferings, and above all a relation to Jesus Christ that not only lends new dignity to this earthly life, but that saves his soul and prepares him for eternal companionship with God. "Neither is there salvation in any other." Therefore, we must convey this Gospel to the world. There is no worthy reason for being concerned about the salvation of the man next to us which is not equally applicable to the man five thousand miles away. Foreign missionary interest presupposes breadth of soul. Any one can love his man to love all men. He who has that the world needs is debtor to the world. The true disciple would feel this even if Christ had spoken no command. The missionary impulse would have stirred him to spontaneous action. Christ simply voiced the highest and holiest dictates of the human heart when He summoned His followers to missionary activity and zeal. The question whether the heathen really need Christ may be answered by the counter question: Do we need Him? and the intensity of our desire to tell them of Christ will be in exact proportion to the intensity of our own sense of need.

3. The Command of Christ.—The circumstances in which He expressed His wish were inexpressibly solemn. He had risen from the dead and was about to ascend to the Father. But ere He left His disciples, He said unto them: "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." There is no gainsaying the command. Whether we consider the person who gave it, the circumstances in

which it was given, or the duty imposed, we must regard it as the weightiest of utterances.

No one can read the New Testament without seeing that the evangelization of the world was the supreme thought of Christ. He came into the world to save it. He sought not merely for the rich and the influential, but for men as men, irrespective of their wealth or position. He could not bear to see men perish, and the very thought of it caused Him keenest agony. He Himself was a missionary and His entire ministry was a missionary ministry. And still the world's evangelization is His supreme thought. He is the "same yesterday, to-day and forever." He knows no distinction of race or caste. He loves men, and, as Phelps has said, the most attractive spots to Him are "those which are crowded with the densest masses of human beings." Now, as of old, the Son of Man looks upon a sorrowing, dying world with pity unutterable.

Since the salvation of men is Christ's supreme thought, it should be ours. How is it possible for one who professes to follow Christ not to believe in missions, when missions is simply the organized effort to carry out the will of the Master?

Other things must be taken into consideration. There is the question of health, the question of duty towards one's home, the question of qualification, as many other problems that will have to be faced and settled in the presence of God. One thing we cannot get away from is the fact that all who name the Name of Christ are called to a definite part in this warfare, by the consecration of talents, means and time to the extension of the Kingdom.

"O matchless honor, all unsought,  
High privilege surpassing thought,  
That Thou shouldst call me, Lord, to be  
Linked in work-fellowship with Thee;  
To carry out Thy wondrous plan,  
To bear Thy messages to man;  
In trust with Christ's own word of grace  
To every soul of human race."

### MARCH 1.—SONGS OF THE HEART. III. HOW GOD LEADS MEN.

Psalm 23.  
(CONSECRATION MEETING.)

#### HOME READINGS.

- Mon., Feb. 24.—God our Guide. Gen. 31.  
3-12.  
Tues., Feb. 25.—By a pillar of fire. Ex.  
13, 17-22.  
Wed., Feb. 26.—Teaches us His Way. Ps.  
25, 8-12.  
Thurs., Feb. 27.—We shall not stumble.  
Prov. 3, 6-23.  
Fri., Feb. 28.—Into the promised land.  
Jer. 2, 4-6.  
Sat., Feb. 29.—Answering prayer. Jas.  
1, 5-8.

#### INTRODUCTION.

This is undoubtedly a psalm of David, who was thoroughly familiar with the shepherd's work. In Eastern lands the shepherd was accustomed to lead his flock out to the verdant land where they would not only find pasture, but also refreshing coolness during the heat of the day. In such a place there would be the softly flowing stream whose waters would quench the thirst.

Probably in this psalm David recalls his own experience, thinks of his many wanderings of his early life with his father's flock, of the care and watchfulness, of the hard and constant toil for the sheep, of the perils encountered, etc. That life had not been in vain. Had he not learned something of the Divine tenderness and strength. In this little

psalm he seeks to give emphatic expression to his full belief in the watchful care of God.

#### FOR THE BLACKBOARD.

"The 23rd Psalm is the nightingale of psalms. Blessed be the day on which that psalm was born. It has charmed more grief to rest than all the philosophy of the world."—Henry Ward Beecher.

#### EXPOSITORY HINTS.

V. 1. "The Lord is my Shepherd." This intimates God's personal acquaintanceship with us. The Eastern shepherd knows the members of his flock individually and everyone responds to its name.

The figure here used indicates intense practical sympathy. Sheep are strangely helpless and dependent.

"I shall not want." The very term "shepherd" is sufficient reason for such confidence. God will make all needful provision.

V. 2. "He maketh me to lie down," etc. This speaks of peace, quiet and repose.

V. 3. "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." Take which way He may with us He leads us in righteousness. Guided by God we may be sure that our feet will be directed in the right way. He leads, we follow.

"For His Name's sake." In accordance with His tender mercy—faithful to His name.

V. 4. "Valley of the shadow," etc. A deep ravine—full of gloom even at mid-day.

V. 5. "Thou hast prepared a table." David was not thinking regretfully of the richer table he had left in the palace in Jerusalem, but felt that it was a mercy he had a table at all. Thankfully he felt that he had a full cup.

V. 3. "He restoreth my soul." Eastern travellers tell us that the shepherd is much occupied with looking after straying sheep. We need continually to be restored from sins, from backslidings, from errors.

V. 5. "Thou anointest my head." In the East it is a mark of great respect to pour perfumed oil on the head of a distinguished guest. It served for refreshment.

#### SUGGESTIVE HINTS.

There are many who do not think gratefully of the blessings that are still left at their side, but take a dreary satisfaction in counting the blessings they have lost. David did just the opposite of this.

David's gratitude was religious. He recognized that God had prepared his table. The source of all his mercies was his Divine Shepherd.

David said, "The Lord is my Shepherd." Are we able to use this little emphatic word of appropriation? What better are we for knowing what we know of God if we cannot?

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, by the living waters which He gives, satisfies every want of the soul. He does not give us a cup of water which is exhausted at a draught, but a fountain of water in our own souls, ever flowing, ever fresh, ever inexhaustible.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures," is as complete a picture of abundant satisfaction as it is possible for words to make.

There is plenty of good pasture for all sheep, and it is no part of the sheep's business to try to find the pasture for itself. That is the Shepherd's work.