

an assembly of one hundred and forty-four Christian men, all of whom enjoy the confidence of those who know them best, except perhaps two or three. Many of these men seem to be not only true Christians, but men of very fair ability, practical ideas, and clear views concerning the most important points in our missionary policy. Not a few of them will, I trust, before many years develop a leadership which will be much needed in our rapidly expanding work."

THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT.

BY BISHOP THOBURN.

Selected from Bishop Thoburn's new book, "The Church of Pentecost."

WHEN Sir Samuel Baker was making explorations in the region of the upper Nile, he chanced to pitch his tent one evening upon the sands of a bed of a large river. The heat was stifling, and the surrounding hills and valleys looked as if no drop of water had fallen for years. About midnight Sir Samuel was aroused from sleep by his Arab guard calling out in great alarm, "The river! the river!" He sprang from his cot, and hearing the rush and roar of an approaching flood, knew that the rains had suddenly burst upon the mountains, and that the dry sands would soon be swept by a rushing torrent. He had barely time to escape before the flood was upon him. Having gained a safe place on the bank of the stream, he again lay down to sleep, and when he awoke next morning he found that the whole scene had been transformed. The birds were singing in the trees overhead, the people were rejoicing in their huts and fields, and a broad river twelve or fifteen feet deep was flowing quietly within its banks. The Arab peasants began at once to take advantage of the coming of the river, by opening channels along which the water might flow into their little fields. No one among them seemed distressed by the thought that the river might not stay. It had come for the whole season. They trusted the ordinary course of nature without a moment's hesitation. They rejoiced in the presence of the river, and yet each one knew that to make its waters available for his own little field, it would be necessary for him to open a channel in which the water might flow from the river to the field for which it was needed.

Pentecost did for all believers what the midnight flood did for Sir Samuel Baker; it ushered the coming of the river of the water of life which was to flow till the end of time. All believers become heirs to this life-giving Spirit, and all should think of him, and speak of him, as a living Presence in this world, pledged to remain among God's people forever more.

The believer, however, may still pray for the gift of the Spirit, but he does so as the peasant opened the way for the rill of water which was to connect his little garden with the brimful river from the mountains. We may pray for a Pentecostal blessing without denying the

immediate presence of the Pentecostal Spirit. We have not been enjoined to wait, perhaps for days, but are assured that the water of life flows evermore in full view of the eye of faith. We may seek for special manifestations of the Holy One in times of special need, as, for instance, when commissioned to perform special service, or to endure peculiar trials. In all this, however, we are only availing ourselves of the ever-present help of the Spirit, and not practically forgetting that the outpouring of Pentecost ever occurred.

LOVING WORDS.

LOVING words will cost but little,

Journeying up the hill of life;
But they make the weak and weary

Stronger, braver for the strife.

Do you count them only trifes?

What to earth are sun and rain?

Never was a kind word wasted.

Never was one said in vain.

When the cares of life are many,

And its burdens heavy grow,

Think on weak ones close beside you,—

If you love them, tell them so.

What you count of little value

Has an almost magic power,

And, beneath their cheering sunshine,

Hearts will blossom like a flower.

So, as up life's hill we journey,

Let us scatter, all the way,

Kindly words, for they are sunshine

In the dark and cloudy day.

Grudge no loving word or action,

As along through life you go;

There are weary ones around you,—

If you love them, tell them so.

—The Esoteric.

STARTERS NEEDED.

BY ROBERT WHITAKER.

THE woman at the organ was short-sighted, and perhaps for that reason her touch when she began was rather timid and faltering. She played a few bars and then struck the note for the singers to begin. But no one started. Before she had finished the line one or two singers attempted to catch the tune, but they did not sing together, and the effort broke down. The organist was confused, but the leader simply said: "Now, let us begin again. Some of you singers be ready at the right time and lead off in good style." This was done, and when the first note was struck half a dozen strong voices bore it up, and the song went with a will.

There were plenty of people there who could sing. Most of them were willing to sing, but they were waiting for somebody else to begin. All that was needed was a starter. Yet no one wanted to be the starter, though when they were sufficiently encouraged, so many struck the first note that no one had the sense of being alone.

The world is greatly in need of starters. The average prayer meeting lags for the first five minutes because many who are willing to testify are not willing

to be first to speak the witnessing word. Sometimes with a good live leader the enthusiasm of attendants is so stirred that two or three are on their feet just as soon as the time for testimony comes. But usually there is an awkward wait and a lame beginning, and it not infrequently happens that the whole meeting is half spoiled by the poor start.

Half the tardiness at church is probably due to the same cause. So many are afraid to be first. It is counted no disgrace to dawdle into the morning service from five to fifteen minutes late, although many are disturbed by it and the service is positively injured for the whole congregation by such habits of church attendance. But to be there first is to excite the laughter of the careless and the concern of timid souls. Yet if young people could be persuaded in large numbers to make special effort always to lend a strong hand of helpfulness at the outset, all our church meetings would be wonderfully improved.

In many other of the affairs of life starters are needed. Every great moral movement lags in the first generation because so few are willing to take hold at the start. When the movement is fairly on its way, thousands are ready to take hold and help. But the need is greatest when the help is least. The same thing is true, more or less, in the common relations of daily life. How we all admire the man or woman who is willing to go ahead. And how we suffer for lack of them. So many willing to follow, but so few willing to start out alone. We need more starters, people on the alert to take hold of things at the beginning instead of waiting for others to get things going before they lend a hand. When the first note strikes, get ready, and let's all start at the beginning. —Young People.

THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

BY REV. C. T. SCOTT, B.A.

WE have put such sanctity about the sacramental symbols that we have overlooked their social significance. Every publicity possible should be given to the Lord's Supper because of its social importance. It teaches the great social law of fraternity. At the communion table the prince and the pauper, the scholar and the simpleton have been brought to the sense of brotherhood, as they drank the emblems of the Lord's blood from the same cup. This is the world's best guarantee of fraternity. If I wanted to blight the Church, I would say, "Get proud! put on airs." No church is so barren of spiritual life as that one where the members shake hands with two fingers, and silk and satin curls up when it touches print or gingham. There is a menace to the social teaching of the Lord's Supper in the introduction of individual communion cups. I know that this is the age when the microbe crank is abroad, but if we listen to his mandate we will soon have to worship God, sitting in little sterilized cabinets. Any doubtful advantage gained in this way is more than lost by