

## CHAPTER II.

Tuesday the next week was the adjourned meeting. The members were all present; they had diligently searched the Scriptures and made inquiry of friends who had tried and proved and were abundantly satisfied as to the vast superiority of the system. They were ready to abandon all their schemes and enthusiastically adopt "Systematic Giving," as the plan of meeting the expenses of their Church.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Thorp. Prayer was offered, the business introduced, and one of the members arose and moved the adoption of "God's way" of raising funds for the support of the cause, several friends were prepared to second the resolution. There was no discussion. The vote was unanimous. The Doxology was heartily sung and the meeting closed.

On Friday of that week the new pastor came, to go in and out among them as the servant of the Master, to sympathize with them in all their trials, and to rejoice and encourage them in their hopes, to be their spiritual instructor and leader, as far as the light of the Holy Spirit should shine on his own heart and life.

He was met by many of the friends who extended to him their cheerful greetings, and unfeigned welcomes, and expressed their hopes that he was a God-sent messenger—a true ambassador of the cross—to whom were committed the words of reconciliation, whose prayers and beseechings would not be in vain.

The next day he called on Mr. Thorp, who while he still held the hand which he had shaken heartily, told him about their meeting, and how they had adopted the system he had so strongly advocated. "I am glad," was the calm reply of the pastor. "The Lord will surely bless us in our recognition of Him in this line of duty."

The first Sabbath of Mr. Brave's ministry the people brought of their "prosperity" and the largest amount of money ever secured on an ordinary occasion was taken from the boxes. It required only a few weeks to demonstrate the superiority of the plan.

At the end of his first month the pastor received several dollars on account and was paid all his moving expenses. At the end of the second month more money was paid him, and at the end of the first quarter the treasurer came to the pastor's room, and with his face beaming with true Christian joy and gratitude, poured the balance of the three months' salary on the center-table, saying as he did so, "There! we have never been able to do that before, our pastors have never been paid punctually."

The next quarter the offerings increased considerably. Before coming to Church the money set apart for the Lord was distributed among the members of the family. The mother and children had the luxury of giving as well as the husband and father; and so dimes, and quarters, and dollars were poured in as offerings unto the Lord.

At the annual meeting it was reported that the pastor's salary was fully paid, that \$130 of the old debt had been cleared, and that there was a balance of \$15 to the credit of the Church. It was unanimously recommended that \$100 be added to the pastor's salary for the ensuing year.

But these were not the only results. God was as prompt in opening "the windows of heaven" as the people were in bringing in the tithes. With the ministry of Mr. Brave the Church commenced to prosper. "The crooked paths became straight and the rough places plain, and the glory of the Lord filled His house." The Spirit was poured down as floods upon the

thirsty land; rivers were opened in the desert the thirsty land became springs of water. The greatest revival of religion ever known in that part of the country occurred that fall and winter. Over fifty names were added to the list of Church members, and other Churches also largely augmented their numbers.

The second year's work had not been entered upon when the pastor introduced the matter of restoring the building and modernizing the pews. At first this was felt to be too great an undertaking, but their Joshua said "we are well able," and so the work was entered upon and pushed forward until the dilapidated almost ruined structure was transformed into a bright, comfortable and convenient Church, with the addition of the most approved apparatus for heating.

The cost was \$1,535. Of this money the Church gave according to its ability—and the Lord, through His people, provided the rest. The money was needed it came in from known and unknown friends, and when the work was completed the contractor received his bill.

Well into the fifth year Mr. Brave continued his indefatigable labors in connection with the Church, and then resigned in favor of a larger field, leaving no Church or personal debt behind, and carrying with him a present of over \$200, besides many personal gifts, and the best wishes of his many friends.

The above is a tract issued by the Special Committee on Systematic Benevolence, appointed by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

## A STORY:—PROSPERITY vs. ADVERSITY. WHICH IS THE MORE DESIRABLE?

Ⓘ BEGIN this paper with a story that is authentic, myself being witness.

When at the renowned Hospice of St. Bernard on the Alps, a young friend of mine fell in love with one of the noble breed of dogs for which the relatively lowly monastery has won a name beyond most. After a good deal of diplomacy and chaffering, and a generous and tempting offer of English gold, the great dog was purchased. It was a magnificent creature. What human eye had I—brown, translucent, piercing, intelligent, compassionate, brave, penetrative. His chest and shoulders were leonine. His forepaw muscular and powerful as ever human hand. His whole make massive and noticeable. He had the bluest of blue blood of his breed in his veins. If I remember rightly, a score of medals and ribbons hung from his velvety neck on State occasions, each marking rescue of a human life. Bernard was his name.

He travelled homeward with us—not without many troubles and worries ensuing—over Switzerland, north, mid, and southern Italy, Germany and France. At last he was safely housed in a kennel near a great mansion that was the lord of the manor's dwelling place, with only a small town near.

Everybody knew everybody and everything that took place there—e. g., if a "laddie" at the end of the town cut a finger, it was in every mouth within less than twenty-four hours; or some small Smith, Brown, Robinson, or Jones, got a new kite or doll, its whole history and mystery was bruited abroad with magic; celebrity.

These rural characteristics and illustrations of manners and customs are told that it may be apprehended how large and epoch-making an event the arrival of so splendid a dog as Bernard could not fail to be. Its arrival had been heralded by