

CHURCH PRAYER MEETING.

Christian Endeavor.

Warring the Good Warfare.

"WARRING THE GOOD WARFARE."—1 Tim. i: 18—The word "warfare" in our Scripture does not mean simply a single battle. It means rather the conduct of a whole campaign, including everything that ministers to its final and culminating success—many battles may be, marches, strategies, armings, disciplines, whatever belongs to a successful soldieryship.

For the Christian life is not just one fight and then having done with it; it is sustained conflict, until, enduring unto the end, the crown of life shines upon the victor's brow.

One question is. How shall we war this good warfare? I think we can find efficient answer as we gather light and suggestion from the verses preceding and succeeding our special Scripture.

First. We shall war the good warfare by seeking to be true to the high expectations that were forecasted for us. (1 Tim. i: 18). "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee; "that thou therein do a kingly work," as Luceur renders it. That is to say, O Timothy, thou shalt war the good warfare by being true to and fulfilling the holy prophecies which were said concerning thee.

Doubtless these prophecies in the case of Timothy were unusual. But I think there were for Timothy, and there have been for us as well, high and holy anticipations, possibly even sacred than were these unusual prophecies of the church. These high and holy anticipations and expectations are like avant couriers, running before each one of us.

There is the prophecy of a holy ancestry. (2 Tim. i: 5). Oliver Wendell Holmes remarks that most people think that any difficulty of a physical sort can be cured if a physician is called early enough. "Yes," Dr. Holmes replies, "but early enough would commonly be two hundred years in advance." There is the tremendous law of heredity, the awful sweep and reach of which science is just now beginning to throw some adequate light upon. By this law takes in its strong grasp not only features and damages and incitements which are physical; it pushes onward into coming generations characteristics which are mental and moral also. And if one be bidden out of a religious ancestry, it is a vast boon and blessing. And to be steadily determined to be true to such ancestry, and to refuse to run athwart the strain of it, is a tremendous help and impetus in warring the good warfare.

There is the prophecy of your own ideals about yourself. Do you remember Wordsworth's poem of "Laodamia"? The oracle had said that the Greeks could not conquer the Trojans except some ship of Greece, pushing itself boldly up upon the Trojan shore, the chief should be the first to suffer death. The husband of Laodamia determined to be the chief who grounding his vessel's keel the first upon the Trojan strand, should meet death first, and so open the gates for the Grecian victory. After his death, the husband of Laodamia, by the permission of the gods, revisits his wife to tell her the story of his death. And the poem is the recital to her of how he purposed to do the noble deed; but for love of life and for love of her was full of hesitation, and on the edge of it and yet not doing it.

Ah, that was the secret of it—that must be the secret of every noble life and deed; notwithstanding frailties, getting lofty thought in act embodied. Thus, with truth to your ideals, war the good warfare.

Second. We shall war the good warfare by holding Faith. (1 Tim. i: 19). "Holding faith."

Think of Timothy a moment—not naturally robust, not naturally achieving and pioneering, in Ephesus, one of the wickedest of cities, confronted by a splendid and awfully corrupt heathenism—set at making head against all this.

Daily Readings.

First Day—The great summons—2 Pet. 1: 10-21.

Second Day—"Immediately we endeavored"—Acts 16: 6-10.

Third Day—"They forsook all"—Luke 5: 4-11, 27, 28.

Fourth Day—A more convenient season—Acts 24: 22-27.

Fifth Day—"Thy servant heareth"—1 Sam. 3: 1-10.

Sixth Day—"Here am I; send me"—Isa. 6: 1-10.

Seventh Day—God's call; what is our response?—Eph. 4: 1-6, 17-32.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, MAY 27.—"God's call; what is our response?" Eph. iv: 1-6, 17-32. God's call to us may be noted as having three important qualifications on account of its origin. It is infinitely wise in its purpose, infinitely loving in its tone, and infinitely successful in its accomplishment. It has also three striking characteristics pertaining to itself, that may be clearly expressed thus:—

From SIN. 2 Cor. vi: 14-18. [3-15]
God's call to us is To SANCTIFICATION. 1 Pet.
For SERVICE. Mark xvi. 15.

Now what is our response to this threefold call? From sin; are we willing to leave our pet sins, to give up these natural weaknesses which we seem to think we should be pitied for, rather than blamed, at His call? To sanctification; that is separation from the old life complete and unconditional, burning the ships behind us that there may be no returning, can we say, "Yes Lord," to this? For service; some seem to jump at this call, before having answered the first two. It is useless, it is deadly. God requires "Yes" to the first part before He can accept a "Yes" to the last. Will you make him the threefold reply to-day? Reference passages; Isa. 55: 1-3, Matt. 4: 18-22; 9: 9-13, Mark 10: 21, 12; Luke 9: 57-62; 1 Cor. 1: 2, 9, 26-31; Gal. 5: 13; Col. 3: 15; 1 Thes. 5: 23, 24; 2 Tim. 1: 8-12; 1 Pet. 1: 15, 2: 20-23; 1 Jno. 31; Rev. 19: 6-9.

BRIEFLY PUT:—The call to us is personal, (Isa. 43: 1; Jno. 10: 3). It is present, (Heb. 3: 7, 8). It is pressing, (2 Cor. 5: 20.)

Items of Interest.

A grand rally of the Junior Endeavorers of Toronto, will be held in the Pavilion on Friday, 18th., at which interesting addresses will be delivered, and banners presented to societies having all their members present.

On Thursday last a Missionary Mass Meeting of the Toronto Young People's Presbyterian Societies was held under the auspices of the Y.P.P.U. in Bloor St. Church. Rev. W. G. Wallace, B.D., in the chair. Mr. Jno. S. Patterson addressed the meeting earnestly and eloquently on the importance of the Missionary movement, and Rev. Mr. MacVicar, of Honan, gave a vivid picture of the needs of the work in China. There was a large attendance, and a deep impression of the need of consecrated workers at home and abroad was created.

Will every Christian Endeavorer who reads this department send us a post-card giving us the name and officers of his society? We want to know you better, will you give us the opportunity? Write Christian Endeavor in the left hand corner of the address side of your card.

The transgressions which we see and confess are but like the farmer's small samples which he brings to market, when he has left his granary full at home. We have but a very few sins which we cannot observe and detect, compared with those which are hidden from ourselves, and unseen by our fellow-creatures.—C. H. SPURGEON.