



THE Vacation season is almost here. "Summer holidays." Who does not welcome the words? For what are you planning? Physical rest alone? That perhaps is the uppermost thought in the minds of the majority, and rightly so. And yet, I have sometimes fancied that rather strange methods have been followed to secure rest. But of that, let each one be his own best judge. Take your vacation rest where you can realize the most from it, and return to your work really refreshed and strengthened. But do not make your own advantage the one exclusive thought. Even during the holidays you will find many opportunities for unselfish ministry. Do not neglect them. To make one's self more truly serviceable, should be the uppermost idea. Then will be enjoyed a "good time." Indeed, and such I wish all my young readers wherever they may reside. May all summer recreations be truly re-creations for body and mind, for real present enjoyment and increased future service. God bless the holidays!

BEFORE you read this, the annual report of your Sunday School, Epworth League, Young Men's Club—indeed, of the whole work of your circuit, will have been made. District meetings will all have been held, and the Annual Conferences will be in session. What the statistics will show it is yet too early to say, but one question we may all personally ask ourselves, "Have I done my best for the work of God during the year?" The precise official position one will never know, and the principle is one and the same in all. God requires diligence and faithfulness from everyone. Then ask the question and as you retrospect the year, it will do you good to honestly press it home. Have you contributed your share to the labor performed? Have you any right to a measure of credit for the successes won? Are you to blame for the lack of harvest? Be honest. Be true. And resolve that the coming conference year shall find you faithfully at your post, putting your whole heart into your work, ever praying, laboring, trusting, hoping, for larger gains for God and more fruit from your toil than ever in the past.

CHRISTIAN experience cannot run long on one dead level of monotony. New occasions arise that call for fresh responses. The claims of discipleship may be met to-day, but tomorrow brings larger opportunity and consequent increased responsibility. The first disciples of Jesus heard His voice and followed Him; but soon He made new demands, and the more weighty official duties of apostleship laid superior claims on their time and thought and energy. It is ever so with the Christian whose soul life is healthful and expansive. James Martineau well said that "high hearts are never long without hearing some new voice, some distant clarion of God, even in their dreams; and soon they are observed to break up the camp of ease and start on some fresh march of faithful service." There is something wrong with the Christian whose days are passed as if on the wearisome tramp and incessant grind of a

treadmill, with little of brightness or joy to hearten and cheer him in his toil. We may have action without progress. Our lives as followers of Christ demand both. "The fresh march of faithful service" is very different from the notions of soldiers who merely "beat time." Let not life pass without conscious progress. Thought, affection, service—all must progress if we would advance in the knowledge and experience of acceptable Christian discipleship, for Christ calls not only to happy fellowship and loving communion with Him for our own sakes, but to new activities for the good of our fellows and the extension of His Kingdom among men. Only by hearing and obeying these new calls to service can we do His will or realize life's best and only permanent possessions.

ONCE, when a quaint yet thoroughly good old Christian was asked where he lived, he answered with another question, "Do you mean where my body lives, or where my soul lives?" When the request was made for his soul's address, he replied, "I live in a house called Faith, on a street called Love, and at Expectation corner." I have come to the conclusion that the dear old saint had wisely chosen his residence. And the best part of it is that there is plenty of room for others. The "street called Love" is not overcrowded, and on it there are many such corner lots still available as building sites for houses of Faith. What is your address? Do not choose to live in any unhealthy locality. Move quickly to a new one now. The street our old friend named is broad and sunny, the prospect is delightful, the surroundings wholesome, the neighbors most congenial; indeed, it is the fairest street in the whole city. There's a site on it awaiting you. The house called Faith on Expectation corner is wonderfully capacious, not at all narrow or meanly fitted, as some would make us think. It is full of windows, through which one may look out over a glorious landscape, and by which the bright sunshine of God's most radiant light pours in to flood the rooms with health and cheer. Who would live in any house called Unbelief or Distrust after inspecting the ideal home on Expectation corner? Not I! Neither, I hope, would you. Let everybody living in any equal, unexcelled, move quickly into that section of God's beautiful city named by our happy old friend. The rents are not exorbitant, the terms indeed are most moderate, and, don't forget it, friend, there's still plenty of room for you.

UNLESS we are willing to give we need not ask God to take. We may sing most lustily, "Take my life and let it be," and yet be quite unwilling to give it to Him to whom the petition is personally addressed. God is no robber. He will not take without our willing consent. This is why the so-called act of consecration has come to mean so little, and for the same reason the consecration service has little force. Consecration is essentially practical. It is not merely an intellectual act of assent to God's claims, but an active and willing admission of them prompting a real and

heartily consent to His rule. It is not a beautiful and sweet sentiment regarding God, but a complete surrender to His control. We may produce a happy state and condition of the emotions and yet be far from loyal compliance with God's supreme will of command. This active personal relation to the claims of the Father is of utmost importance. The spirit of self-surrender means more than passive submission to God's will. It requires positive and active obedience to His commands. An unwilling soul may cry "take," "take," "take," forever without yielding to God's readiness to take is conditioned and determined by our willingness to give. A more thoughtful consideration of this great truth would tend to a greater degree of thoroughness in our consecration and devotion in us both a deeper humility and a loftier nobility of soul life and experience.

IT is related of Emerson, that once when on a trip through New Hampshire, he saw a large and ungalvanically looking building in connection with the structure of a proportion and general ugliness, he asked for the architect. The reply he got was, "Oh, there isn't any architect as yet. I'm just building it, and then there's a man coming from Boston to put the architecture into it."—As with that building, so with many a human life. Asked for the architect or plans, many would have to reply, "I'm just building it." For every soul structure that you and I are rearing, there are choice plans, beautiful outlines, abundant specifications, adequate materials, and, above all, a Divine and competent architect. Why should any of us "just build," without having a grand ideal in mind? Why experiment? Our Heavenly Father has a perfect structure in view for every one of us, and in Jesus Christ our Lord we have a complete pattern after which to model it. Following the specifications in the inspired Word, and aided by the inspiring Spirit, each one may eventually approximate the ideal. God cannot realize for us, but He graciously helps all who seek, to achieve for themselves; and daily study of His plans and constant effort in harmony with them will ensure a beautiful soul house.

"For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build."

And in strength or weakness, for grace or ugliness, to the glory of God or the spread of sin, as the abode of virtue or the home of vice, with eternal consequences to the builder, the building goes on daily. May I not, therefore, fittingly enquire, "Who is your architect?"

SAID an elderly friend to me some years ago, "I am not one whit expressive already for the service I ever gave to God's cause." He was not a very rich man, but his gifts to the work of the Church were comparatively very large. In the conversation which we had together, growing out of some of his recent benefactions, he added to the poorer for nothing, I ever said that, though his monetary contributions might not return to him in a financial sense, they did bring him a feeling of inward satisfaction, peace, and joy that could not be computed on any basis of material gain, and he was richer, not poorer, because of what he gave. The truth of this, every young Christian should personally prove. "Give and it shall be given unto you," is experimental. If the spirit of the giver be right, no doubt of the returns need be entertained. They are sure. I have read that the Princess Eugenie, who