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REV. DAVID M. SWEETS, D. D., Editor.

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How many prodigals are kept out of the Kingdom of God by the unlovely characters of those who profess to be inside!—Henry Drummond.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The consciousness that Jesus is standing at our side, that He is our ever present Companion, will cause us to lose all relish for the unholy or unclean thought, word or deed. The perpetual presence of the Christ is the most powerful preventive of evil in our lives.

A careful study of the teachings of Jesus as He journeyed through Judea and adjoining countries with His disciples will reveal the fact that He was laying the foundation for the future development of His disciples in knowledge and power. Several times we read that the faith of His disciples was strengthened after His death when they remembered certain things that He had said to them while He was with them. A similar task confronts Christian people today in dealing with young people. Parents, Sunday school teachers, friends—all should seek to anticipate the temptations and dangers to which children will be exposed and to prepare them for such experiences. It is for this reason that Christian parents and faithful friends endeavor to ground the young people in the faith, that they may be prepared for the days of doubt that are sure to come.

What effect does our conduct have as we thus seek to lay in the hearts of young people the foundations for future development in faith and grace? We teach them what to believe and what to do. As they shall look back over our lives will they see in our conduct confirmation for their faith? Does our conduct conform to our teaching? Can it be said of us that we have taught one thing and practiced another? It is eminently true, as one has said, that we are laying the foundation for the faith or the doubt of the next generation.

Men often cry out for a sign or some unusual thing to confirm their faith. They forget that the revelation of God's glory and truthfulness and power are about us everywhere. It is related of Martin Luther that he one day declared, "I saw not long since a sign in the Heavens." What was this sign that Luther saw?—some startling natural phenomena? No. This is the way in which he described it: "I was looking out of my window at night and beheld the stars and the whole majestic vault of God held up without my being able to see the pillars on which the Master has caused it to rest." With a joyful appreciation of God's almighty power and grace, he cried out: "I will trust Him even when I cannot trace Him."

Stories of the joy with which soldiers on the front in Europe receive and read the Word of God are frequent and inspiring. An Austrian officer, who in civil life is a lawyer, has written that the letter-carrier recently handed him a package, which he received with disappointment, because he had hoped for letters from his home. He says that his joy was very great, however, when he opened the package and found that it was a copy of the Word of God. He began to read it at once in the glare of the flashing cannon. Another officer writes: "I send you my deepest gratitude for the Book which shall be my preferred companion, a comfort in trouble and an inspiration to faith." Altogether about 800,000 of

the "Million Testaments" which has been the goal of the World's Sunday School Association, have reached the soldiers of Europe. There is still, however, great need. Among the Italian soldiers alone between three and four million men, representing every class in Italian society, are eager to read the life-giving Word of God.

The special season for prayer, self-denial and free will offerings for Foreign Missions in all the churches of our General Assembly (February 1-21) is bringing to the members of the Southern Presbyterian Church an unusual opportunity to render a timely service to the great cause of Foreign Missions. "A Noon Hour Prayer League" has been organized by the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, and every member of our Church is requested to devote a short time to prayer each day at noon during the three weeks of this special season. A great volume of united prayer should go up to God each day in earnest supplication that He will open the way for overtaking the needs of the heathen nations and the unparalleled opportunities that are now presented to our Church. On page 24 of this issue the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions presents another vigorous message concerning this vitally important work, voicing a call to sacrificial living.

In studying the mission work in China during the months of January and February the missionary societies of our Church are informing themselves concerning the world's most needy mission field. Special efforts are being made to reach the children of China. In Sunday school work a unique feature introduced by many of the missionaries, is that the children are first taught to read in connection with their Sunday school lesson. A "Lesson Primer" is issued by the China Sunday School Union, which has upon it "Life Problem Pictures" from Chinese life. The lesson is begun by a discussion of some point of conduct suggested by the picture; class discussion follows, and the whole class session brings itself to a decision regarding some "specific act" which they are urged to "will to do" during the week following. One of the simplest things a member of the class may do is to take this little "Lesson Primer" and teach the big characters inside to some one in his own home or elsewhere. In the lessons for a year or two, some six hundred characters are taught.

Remarkable progress is being made in Sunday school work in South America. A two-months' visitation of the West Coast has just been made by Rev. George P. Howard, Sunday school secretary for that continent, under the World's Sunday School Association. On this trip, Mr. Howard has covered the coast from Concepcion and Temuco in the south to Lima and Callao in the north, and has spent several days in each city visited, so that he has had an opportunity to learn the problems in each school and time enough to go over their solution with teachers and superintendents. Mr. Howard has been organizing the "Cradle Roll" and "Beginners Departments" in many places. Six months ago there was not a single "Kindergarten Department" in any of the fifty Sunday schools in Buenos Aires, with its

Mid-Week Prayer Meeting

BY REV. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN, D. D.

For the Christian Observer.

WALKING WITH JESUS.

Topic for Wednesday, February 14, 1917.

Suggested Scripture Reading: Luke 24:13-35.

All the incidents in the resurrection account of the Gospels are peculiarly charming. And this one of the Emmaus disciples has a wondrous beauty, the beauty of a truth that is stranger than fiction.

These two men had been followers of Jesus but apparently had not thought of Him as the Divine Son of God or the Saviour of the World, perhaps not even as the Messiah. They had accepted Him as a prophet and one who was so "mighty in deed and word before God and all the people," . . . "that it was He who should redeem Israel."

But events with startling swiftness had culminated in the unspeakable calamity of His crucifixion and they were leaving Jerusalem now for Emmaus, some six miles away, in the mood of ruined men. A stranger caught up with them and asked them what they were talking about so intensely. Brokenly they told Him in tones that at times ended almost in a sob.

And then He began to talk. And His talk fell on their hearts like a marvel, the marvel of a blind man who suddenly has his eyes opened. He took them for an excursion through their own Scriptures and showed them everywhere not only a foreshadowed Christ but a Christ who was to suffer when He came and so to enter into His glory.

So talking, the miles passed as moments, and lo, they were at their destination! They could not endure to part now with this fascinating Stranger who had opened their eyes and given them back their hearts well-nigh healed. So they persuaded Him to stay with them for the evening meal.

And then it happened, the miracle, the vision, the thing that changed and remade their lives. As He blessed the bread, and, breaking it, gave to them, they saw for the first time that both His hands were pierced! Suddenly looking at Him now they knew Him! And as suddenly, in that moment, He was gone! They sprang from the table, their message to Emmaus forgotten, their meal unfinished, to hurry back to Jerusalem and the disciples, to tell the wonderful thing that had happened to them. And this was the conclusion of their almost breathless tale: "He was known to us in the breaking of the bread."

And this is what, as they hurried back, they kept saying to each other: "Was not our heart burning within us while He spake to us in the way, while He opened to us the Scriptures?"

There are two great facts on which the emphasis of this remarkable incident seems naturally to fall. The first is on The Present Christ.

I. The Present Christ.

The accent is now on the word "Present." We mean it to differentiate it from the "Past" Christ or the "Future" Christ.

It is a wonderful thing to know the "Past" Christ. All His miraculous, sinless life, all His revelation to us of God, all His atonement for us on the Cross, and His resurrection for our justification are embraced in that. These are the fundamental facts of our faith. And the great Apostle Paul is an example of what it means to a man to have grasped all these. The reason why these Emmaus disciples were so utterly dashed was because they did not know all this. When their Scriptures had been laid open for them as the day by their marvelous Interpreter, they were as men who had been lifted out of the quagmire and placed upon a rock.

And it is a wonderful thing to know the "Future" Christ. As the "Past" Christ is the basis of our faith, so the "Future" Christ may be said to be the basis of our hope. He is preparing our future place in Heaven; His Kingdom is to come on earth; nay, He is Himself coming again. And Paul is likewise an example of what it means to a man to have that hope. These Emmaus disciples, as they left Jerusalem, were without it. A grasp of a "Future" Christ would have steadied and held them.

But there is a third fact which it is essential for every Christian life to grasp in all its significance for us. It is the fact of the "Present" Christ. As such He is the basis of our love and of our communion. And Paul was a shining example of that too. A whole side of his Christian life is expressed in such texts as "Christ liveth in me," and "For me to live is Christ."

And if these three elements were present in Paul, they are all emphasized in the great institution of the Lord's Supper which is the heart of the Christian Church. We are to sit at this Supper "in remembrance" of Him; we are to do it "till He come;" but it is also a perpetual communion with the present Lord, for He has said, "Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." The breaking of the bread is the symbol of His presence with us. And it is for this reason especially that His disciples have always been able to say with these two Emmaus men, "He was known to us in the breaking of the bread."

There are, then, three attitudes to Christ which

may be said to sum up a rounded Christian life. The first is the historical attitude; the second is the eschatological or futurist attitude; and the third is the mystical attitude. Now, without drawing any vain comparisons between the importance of these three, it may be said that no Christian life will be complete unless it has cultivated all; but that which is most lacking today, perhaps, is the cultivation of the mystical attitude through which we come into communion with the "Present" Christ. This is, of course, the approach of prayer. It was this power of a "Present" Christ which fell upon the Emmaus disciples. And it is this power and comfort of a "Present" Christ which is the privilege of all who will cultivate His daily companionship and thus "walk with Him."

And while all the approaches to our Lord are fruitful, it is this approach of the mystic especially which produces the glorious fruitage that made itself manifest in these two disciples, not only on this walk, but in all their after life. This fruitage is the burning heart.

II. The Burning Heart.

It is here we would put the second emphasis of the text.

It is just the lack of the burning heart that stands between most of us and the living of a really great life. "Every great and commanding moment in the annals of the world," writes Emerson, "is the triumph of some enthusiasm." Even in the secular sphere the wonders of the world have never been accomplished by the clear head. They have been done by the burning heart.

Now what is needed for the Kingdom of Christ in the world is more passion. It is needed first of all for entrance into it. A common answer of an unconverted man when he is asked to become a professing Christian is that he will think about it. As if a man who has been brought up in a Christian land and a Christian home with full knowledge of the Gospel needed any more thought in the matter! What he needs is not a clearer head in the matter. It is just the emphasis on that, that is already killing him spiritually. What he needs is a more passionate heart.

And that too is what the Church of Christ needs. There is enough brains in the Church to turn the world upside down. What is needed is not more talent. Those twelve disciples whom Jesus picked up around the shores of the Galilean Lake were no great geniuses. But they turned the world upside down. Why? Just because their hearts were aflame, not otherwise. Even Paul without his passion would sink out of the ranks of the world's great men. The same would be true of Luther or Wesley or Moody or Martin or Livingstone or any of the great moral and spiritual leaders of the Church. Now there is dynamite of that sort in every Christian. But it would take a burning heart to set it loose.

Professor William James has somewhere said that what makes some men temporarily brilliant intellectually under a moderate alcoholic stimulus is that they are psychologically constituted with too many inhibitions. So the bright and original thought that occurs to them is repressed instead of expressed and by and by the power of brilliant and original thinking even suffers. A little alcohol, despite its bad after effects, temporarily breaks down these hyper-inhibitions and lets loose what is in them.

And that is true, too, of our moral and spiritual lives. We suffer from too many conventions and from over-inhibition. There is an embryo hero in every one of us if only something would bring it out and let it loose. Now there is nothing that will do that like contact with some personality already aflame. Dr. G. H. Morrison in a sermon on this very subject tells us of the English essayist Hazlitt, that when he was a young man "his mind was dull and his faculties unawakened." But one day "the poet Coleridge came to see his father, and young Hazlitt walked several miles home with him. Hazlitt tells, in his own eager and eloquent way, all that the walk with Coleridge meant for him. It quickened his intellect, gave him a new world, put a new radiance into the sunset for him, and a new note into the song of every bird. His heart began to burn." It was not till then that his talents became in evidence.

Now that is what we need, for our moral and spiritual lives to lift us out of the spiritually and morally commonplace into the realm of moral and spiritual greatness. We must catch fire from some one. Thomas Arnold put the flame of his ideals in nearly every student that passed through Rugby. Moody left a row of fired hearts behind that are still ablaze through the darkness from one end of the land to the other.

But there is no way of catching fire that can be compared to the one of living and walking in communion day by day with the risen and present Jesus. All the men in the Kingdom who have been men of burning hearts have been men in whom the mystic element, that element of daily communion with the believed and felt Presence of the living Christ, has been strong. It is one of the great evidences, perhaps the greatest, that we have been with Christ, that our hearts burned and are still burning within us.

Louisville, Ky.

Young People's Societies

BY REV. WM. M. ANDERSON, D. D.

USING WHAT WE HAVE.

Prayer Meeting Topic

For the Week Beginning February 18, 1917.

Acts 3:1-10.

DAILY READINGS.

M., Feb. 12. The neglected talent. Matt. 25:24-30.
T., Feb. 13. Using time. Eph. 5:14-17.
W., Feb. 14. Using money. Acts 2:41-47.
T., Feb. 15. Using prayer. Exod. 32:30-35.
F., Feb. 16. Using service. Amos 7:14-17.
S., Feb. 17. Using love. Jas. 2:1-9.

Peter and John had the best thing in the world, faith in Christ enough to secure the use of Christ's power. The lame man asked for gold, they gave him something better, cure. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." His cure was certain, definite and immediate. He leaped up, stood, walked, and entered into the temple, "Walking, leaping, and praising God." "And all the people saw him walking and praising God." "They knew it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him."

When Moses was in the mountains of Midian, keeping sheep, God appeared to him in the burning bush, and said to him, "Go and deliver My people." We need not wonder that he shrank, because it was a great task. While he was learned in the schooling of the Egyptians, he had no training in war. He had no backing but the command of God, and God said to him, "What is that in thine hand?" It was only a shepherd's rod and God said to him, "Throw it down." It turned to a snake. God said, "Take it again," and it became a rod in his hand. By this sign he was assured that he should save Israel. Are we willing for God to use the commonplace things of our lives? We should seek to know how best to use the little powers given to us.

Shamgar had an ox-goad in his hand. God commanded him to use it as a weapon against the Philistines. The ox-goad is a very crude, unwarlike instrument, but by refusing to use it Shamgar would have lost a great victory for God's people. He used it and his victory is a part of history. Are we losing victories because we are unwilling to use crude, unseemly weapons of war?

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,

Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life

Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

The boy David, visiting his brothers in the army, heard the blatant shout of the giant Goliath. He had with him a sling that he used in guarding the sheep. It was to him a means of pleasure and a defense for the flock. His temper was stirred when he heard Goliath's defiance, and he requested that he be permitted to go and meet him. They put on a suit of armor, but he declined to go. He was untried and unskilled in the use of such arms. He took his sling and selected five stones from the brook, and in obedience to God and in the name of God, he went forth to meet and to slay Goliath. This was a very slight weapon for such a great fight and victory. Our little talents and accomplishments may thus be used for the glory of God. Charles M. Alexander's smile, Sam Jones' sense of humor, Robert Harkness' musical nature, Charles M. Stelzle's mechanical training, were all used in the service of God. The legal mind, scholarship, and the football training of Robert E. Speer make him a very fine Foreign Mission Secretary, and a great leader of men. You have no idea what you can do until you try.

A small boy, perhaps out of curiosity, wanted to go out and spend the day where the great crowd gathered to hear the strange prophet. Perhaps his mother fixed him a lunch of five biscuits and two little fish. Somehow Andrew, one of the leaders, found out that he had it, and brought it to Jesus, and with that Jesus fed the multitude. He used what he had in a good way. He might have eaten it himself and still have been hungry, and left the multitude hungry. Youth is the best time to serve God. If the youth is saved for Christ, his life as well as his soul, are saved. Young people lead each other into sin, and why may they not lead each other to Christ?

A very poor widow had two mites. It would have been generous enough if she would have given one of them to the Lord's treasure, but she gave them both. Though nameless, she is famous. Jesus commented on her gift to the discredit of all the others. Here is a good lesson for us; we are inclined to believe that He would rather have the small gift of the liberal than the larger gift of the stingy rich.

"What is that in thine hand, weeping woman?" It is an alabaster box of fragrant ointment. She gave it to Christ and its fragrance fills history. It has prompted many a noble gift. If you have any hidden powers bring them forth. They will show your love for Christ to the world. Your presence in the work of the Church will help it. Break the