

WOMAN'S  
WORK FOR JESUS

*Annie Wittenmyer*

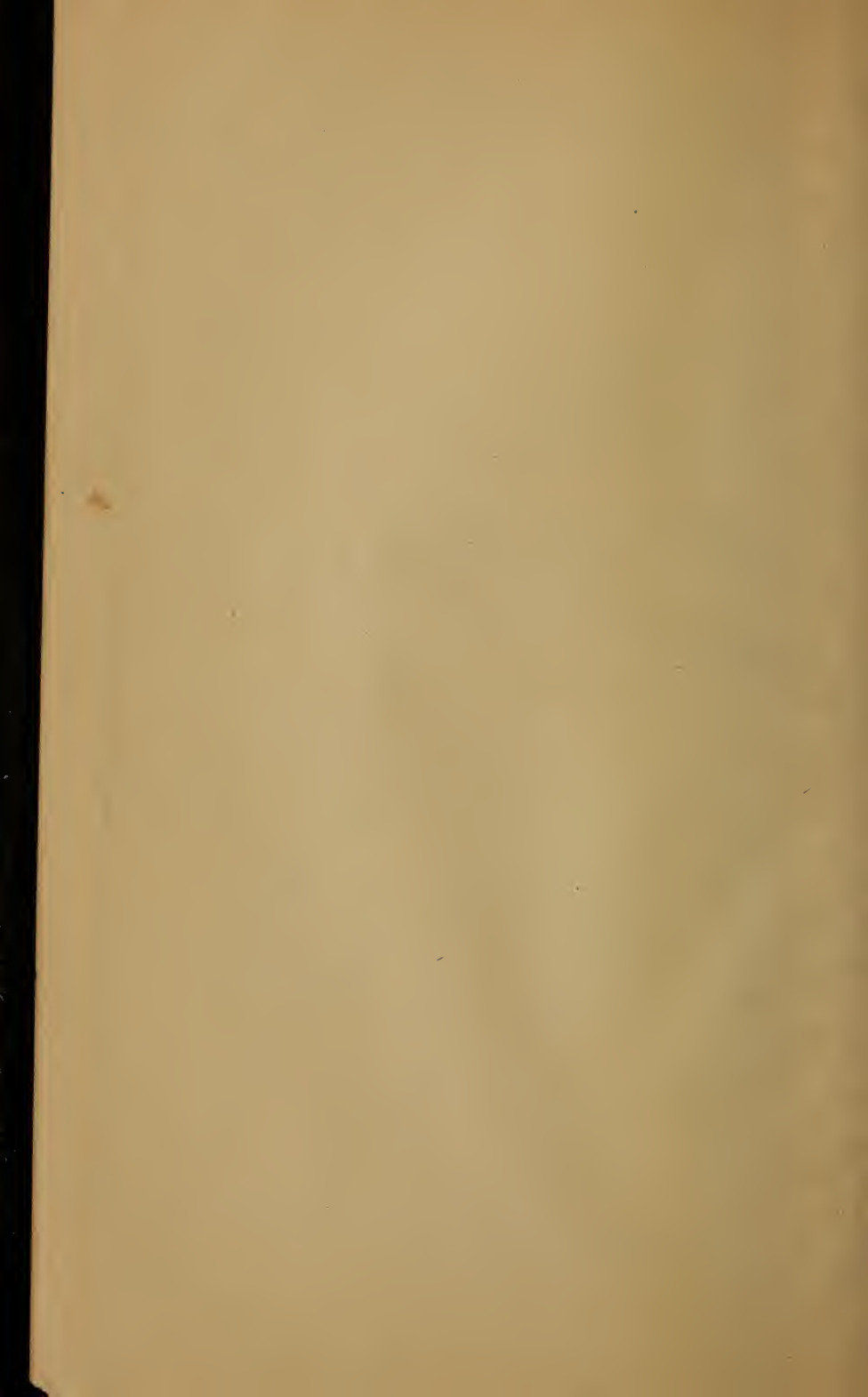
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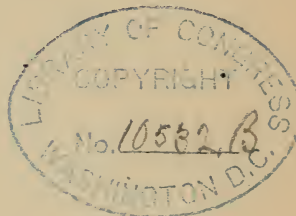






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# WOMEN'S WORK FOR JESUS.



BY

MRS. ANNIE WITTENMYER.

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"Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters."—ISAIAH xxxii. 9.

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TO THE  
EARNEST, WORKING, CHRISTIAN WOMEN  
OF ALL DENOMINATIONS,  
THIS LITTLE VOLUME  
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED  
BY THE AUTHOR.



## PREFACE.

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THIS book is published to meet a felt want in the Church, and is addressed especially to Christian Women.

Much has been said and written, of late, on the home duties of women, their social disabilities, and their claims to political preferment, but very little in regard to Women's Work in the Church.

The writer of these simple pages has left the home duties of women, so long and ably discussed, on the one hand, and the question of their social and political privileges on the other, and entered the broad, uncultivated field lying between the two.

More than two-thirds of the members of the Church are women; and it is time the Church would ask herself the question: What can they do for Christ and humanity? And it seems

eminently proper that women should discuss and answer this question, and suggest plans for their own employment.

Chapter III., written for this book by Rev. I. W. Wiley, D. D., Editor of the "Ladies' Repository," is an able and well-written article, and will be read with great interest and profit.

Aside from this, no literary merit is claimed for the book. Plain, practical questions are dealt with, in a plain, matter of fact way; not so much to please the fancy, *as to stir the heart*.

Some of the facts may be ugly—some of the truths unwelcome; but the writer has not felt at liberty to lower the Christian standard, or temper her words to please worldly professors of religion. And although not indifferent to criticism, she will have, in the event of success or failure, the glorious consciousness that "she hath done what she could."

THE AUTHOR.

PHILADELPHIA,

August 30th, 1871.

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# WOMEN'S WORK FOR JESUS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### A VIEW OF THE HOME FIELD.

WE look over this broad land with its teeming millions, to find that the religious demands of our populous and rapidly growing country are not being met; that the activities of the Church are not keeping pace with the activities of the world; and that the Gospel of Christ is not being preached to the masses.

Nor do we mean by the masses the degraded and criminal, the drunken and licentious, who live in garrets and cellars, and crowd the lanes of our populous cities.

## 14 THE MASSES DO NOT ATTEND CHURCH.

The non-church going multitudes represent all classes, from the lordly millionaire who lives in a palace and fares sumptuously every day, to the humble rag-picker who gathers a scanty living from the gutter.

From careful calculations, based upon facts and statistics from every quarter, we are forced to conclude, taking in the whole extent of our country, that *one-half of our people absent themselves from the house of God*. And of those who do attend public worship, thousands sustain false and idolatrous systems of religion, so that a still larger proportion are without Christian teaching.

It has been estimated that "*not more than one-sixth of the people of the United States ordinarily attend public Christian worship.*"

And the American Sunday School

Union for 1865,—and there has been very little change since,—report that, “In no one of our Eastern States are one-half of the children in the Sunday schools, and in some of our Western States three-fourths of the children and youth are not only ungathered into the Sabbath school, but large numbers are beyond the reach of any established church.”

A deep, undefined feeling of scepticism prevails, which, added to the consciousness of being uncared for, breeds discontent and hatred toward the Church. “For these multitudes are living all around us, many of them within sight of our churches; but our Sabbath bells come to them with no voice of invitation; their hearts have not been touched; their sympathies have not been stirred; the hand of Christian love has not been reached out to them; and many of them are saying, and

saying bitterly "*There are none who care for my soul.*"

They have a sense of being uncared for, neglected, not wanted by the Church.

Not long ago, I saw a drunkard stagger along the street till he came to a church. He stopped and leaned against it till I approached. I found him intelligent and penitent, and full of good desires, but too weak to cope with the adversary alone.

He lived next door to the church—under the very shadow of the stately temple—but not one of the 300 members who stately worshipped there had visited him, or expressed any interest in his salvation, although with his little family he had lived there for months.

Thus neglected, thousands abandon themselves to evil courses, and live unrestrained lives of sin.

And infidelity, and scepticism, and Sabbath desecration, and revelry, and drunkenness, and debauchery prevail on every hand.

Men set their traps openly for the feet of the innocent, and barter in human flesh, and make themselves drunk on the blood of souls.

And this irreligious element in our midst is being largely augmented by accessions from abroad.

A tide of emigration has set in upon us, from all lands, bringing to our shores thousands of pagans, infidels and false religionists.

Our great city centres, which are the chief receptacle of this influx, are already feeling the corrupting, demoralizing influence of these anti-christian elements; while, on our Western borders, thousands of pagans are gathering, and

building their altars and setting up their idols in our very midst.

When political economists and statesmen, looking out upon these storm-clouds, openly express their fears and tremble for the safety of their country, it is time for the Church to arouse herself, put on her strength, and go forth to her God-given mission.

*A great moral contest is before us.* The doctrines of Christ are to be confronted by the teachings of Confucius; our simple forms of worship that we love so well, by the ritualistic mummeries of Romanism; our spiritual religion, by materialism and German rationalism; our churches, by play-houses, and beer-gardens and pagodas.

“We are living, we are dwelling,  
In a grand and awful time,  
In an age, on ages telling—  
To be living is sublime.”



Sublime, if we rise to the glorious possibilities before us.

This land is the great missionary field of the whole world.

The Lord is sending his benighted children from all lands, to our very doors, to be taught of us the lessons of saving truth.

The people of every kindred, nation and tongue, under the skies, are coming to be one with us, in all things.

And we are to lift them up to our Christian civilization, or they are to drag us down towards their barbarisms.

There is power enough in Christianity to hold us, and keep us steadily moving forward on the ascending plain of progress we now occupy ; and power enough to lift all these coming millions to our level, and lift us all to a higher plain of Christian civilization.

But this power must be applied. These masses must be brought in contact with the refining, elevating influences of the Gospel.

A glorious opportunity is before the Church. This land may be made the joy of the whole earth—the radiating centre of Gospel light and influence—a heavenly gateway for all nations.

And upon the fidelity of the Christian Church, in this last quarter of the nineteenth century, will in a large measure depend the future welfare of our own land, and the early enlightenment and Christianization of the world.

If a general view of the Home Field reveals a mission of such extent and magnitude, what shall we say, when we carefully look over the details of the work to be accomplished?

In addition to the wide-spread preva-

lence of immorality and scepticism, we will find schools of rank infidelity; blatant teachers of false doctrines; political combinations for personal aggrandizement, endangering public peace and safety; whiskey rings; gambling hells; nests of vice that breed contagion of the most virulent character; social cancers that feed on the vitals of our moral life; and sinks of iniquity where the degraded and wrecked and ruined of every class gravitate and fester and rot, till the moral atmosphere around us is reeking with social miasma.

The moral condition of thousands in our large cities is simply horrible.

None but those who have made themselves familiar with these haunts of vice and poverty, can form a conception of the degradation and wretchedness of the abandoned classes.

## 22 PLAGUE SPOTS WORSE THAN SODOM.

In the lower wards of New York, where nearly a quarter of a million of souls find a home, the moral destitution is almost incredible.

Huddled together in garrets and cellars, or congregated by hundreds in tenement buildings, which are little else than pest-houses, their spiritual and physical condition is truly appalling.

They seem crowded down, and "hedged in" to lives of sin and shame.

And New York, the gateway of the nation, the receiving depot for a large part of the migrating population of the world, is only a very little worse than the other large cities of our land.

Whole streets, and in some cases wards, are abandoned to the degraded and criminal classes, and become plague spots worse than Sodom, where sin and crime run riot.

Multitudes crowded into these loathsome localities, morally diseased, and spreading disease, with the malignity of demons, crowd each other down the steeps of death.

No power of legislation, no system of benevolence can reach their desperate case.

Nothing but Christianity can go down to the depths of their degradation, and lift them up, and undo their heavy burdens, and break their galling chains, and lead them forth to lives of purity and peace.

There *is* power in the Gospel to purify and sweeten all this putrid mass of humanity.

The followers of Christ are the salt of the earth, and if the salt has not lost its savor, these perishing millions for whom he died may be reached and saved.

But there is an important class, in these homes of sin and wretchedness, demanding special attention :

THE CHILDREN OF THE DEGRADED POOR.

There are thousands of children in these training schools of vice, who know no other teaching, and over whose suffering condition angels might well weep.

*In their innocence and helplessness they find themselves, without any choice of their own, in narrow, filthy quarters ; nursed by drunken mothers ; abused and cursed by brutal, besotted fathers ; neglected and forsaken ; struggling with the first gasp of life for life itself ; breathing a polluted atmosphere ; and overcome in their first contests with evil.*

*Children, who have a life without a childhood ; a soul without a window to let in the light of heaven ; who are driven*

*on through the blackness of despair, by the scorpions, hunger, want, and cold, to madness and to crime.*

This is no fancy sketch—no overdrawn picture.

Thousands are in the midst of this fearful struggle.

Few have the strength to pass safely through the perils of such a childhood; and it is well. For every generous impulse is trampled down, every aspiration crushed out, and all the powers of their being are brought into one *long, fierce, agonizing struggle for life and for bread.*

The abodes of sin and shame are red with the blood of murdered innocents.

Would God I could portray the fearful scenes of suffering I have witnessed. Scenes of agony too deep for human words, the remembrance of which brings tears as I write.

My sisters, who are wasting their sympathies on novels, and shedding their ready tears over imaginary heroes, would do well to look about them for the *real heroes* and *martyrs* writhing under the foot of humanity near their own doors.

This important class is beyond the ordinary range of Church and Sabbath school efforts, and can only be reached by an earnest outgoing spirit of Christianity.

In their helplessness and wretchedness they have a right to look to the Church for sympathy and help. The Gospel of Christ demands their salvation, by every consideration that can move to Christian effort.

They are more accessible and teachable than older sinners; their young hearts yearn for sympathy and love,



and there is much to inspire hope in their behalf.

The strong arm of the Church should be reached out to them; she should become the nursing mother of these straying lambs of the flock, and shelter them in her fold of love.

Thousands might be saved, who if left to drift on in the corrupt channels in which they find themselves, will live and die in the slums of vice.

The Protestant Church in the past has left this great work for the most part to the Church of Rome, or to the enterprise and generosity of a few individuals.

Every denomination should have its homes and schools for poor neglected children.

And many of the wealthy men and women of the Church have reason to

blush with shame, that they have given so much to fine churches, and fine houses, and extravagant living, and so little to save these helpless, perishing ones.

*God is writing his fiery judgments* in many a professedly Christian household, who have thus squandered the Lord's substance. The sword has entered their own flesh, and their sons and their daughters are treading the ways of death.

But we turn from these sickening scenes to *the literature of the country*.

It has been said, that "of the making of books there is no end," but none save those who have carefully investigated the matter can form anything like a just estimate of the vast amount of trashy, sensational reading in circulation in our midst.

The whole country is flooded with overdrawn stories of love, adventures, robbery and murder.

Public taste largely demands this style, and sensational writers find readiest market for their wares.

But this is not all. A surprisingly large contraband trade is being carried on in obscene books and papers.

The printing presses of the land that can be prostituted to this work find abundant employment, and are driven night and day.

And agents are employed in almost every city and town, to spy out young men and young women who may be approached, and into whose hands these vile things may be thrust.

When this is not ventured, the mail is freely used, so that no place is secure.

Like the frogs of Egypt, these vile cor-

rupting books and papers find their way into the very bed-chambers of the pure.

The Dead-Letter Office, which receives but a tithe of these streams of moral corruption, has become a cesspool for much, both written and printed, that is indecent and devilish.

We often wonder that so many young men and women go out from respectable homes to live lives of sin and shame. But if we could lift the veil we would find that fictitious and corrupt literature had been doing their work for years.

Nothing but Christianity can purify these streams of death, and sweeten these bitter fountains.

The sickly, diluted, sentimental stories that crowd our Sabbath school libraries will not cure this evil.

The Church has a great work before

her in this direction, and the importance of furnishing a *pure*, cheap, attractive literature to the masses cannot be over-estimated.

Nor may we look with indifference upon the public amusements of the age.

The stage is one of the most formidable powers that antagonize the Christian Church.

The more formidable, because it assumes an air of respectability and claims to be a teacher of public morals.

Thus disguised, it is making fearful inroads upon the Church and Sabbath school, by fostering and disseminating pride, worldliness, and the love of dress and display.

Great efforts have been put forth from time to time to check the downward tendencies of the stage, and free it from the well-grounded objections that are

constantly being urged against it. But if we may credit those who have labored most faithfully to effect reforms, the plays were never so low, and the tendencies are still downward.

The two lowest plays that have ever found place on the American stage have been best patronized.

As money making, and not moral improvement, is the main object of those who control the amusements of the age, it is to their interest to introduce "plays that will draw," and to cry out "great is Diana of the Ephesians" when any one speaks bold and truthful words against this evil.

Multitudes from all classes gather nightly into these play-houses of the land.

Pride, joy, grief, anger, love, hatred, revenge, jealousy, robbery, murder, and

all the passions of the unregenerated heart, are personified by living actors.

“Like begets like.” The plays shape the character; false notions of life obtain; the passions are inflamed; a love for adventure and fictitious reading is encouraged, and thousands go back to the hard every-day work of life dissatisfied and unfit for its stern duties.

But *places of resort of a very low order abound*, where the plays and costumes are *vulgar* and *indecent*, and men *smoke* and *drink* during the nightly performances; and the fumes of whiskey and tobacco fill all the place.

Would a mother send her child to a drinking saloon, or a brothel, to learn lessons of temperance and virtue? Certainly not.

Nor may we send our children to witness the exhibitions of tempers and pas-

sions that we would not have them follow in their every-day life.

If the Church would maintain her purity and spirituality, she must lift up a standard against the enemy, no matter in what garb, or with what pretensions he comes.

Better, a thousand times, let the worldly professor go out, than to bring the theatre, or the spirit of the stage, into the Church, or in any way have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

The Church must bring her whole force into the conflict, and consecrate her abundant means to the Master's work, if she would successfully meet and overcome the gigantic evils that confront her.

The world is employing her entire force, and pouring out her wealth like



water. There must be equal earnestness and zeal on the part of the Church.

“The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; *pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his vineyard.*”

## CHAPTER II.

### HOW CAN THE MASSES BE REACHED AND EVANGELIZED.

THE great moral contest of the present age must be fought in the homes of the people.

The masses do not come to the Church—the Church must go to them—the Gospel must be carried to their houses.

#### WHO CAN DO THIS WORK?

We have been depending mainly upon the pulpit.

Can ministers of the Gospel reach these multitudes by pulpit or personal efforts?

I believe that ministers can, and are doing a great work; that they are doing

*their* work, but that they cannot, and it never was designed, that they should do all.

They can only hope to reach those who come to the Church, or who are brought within the circle of their personal influence.

The great out-lying masses are beyond their reach.

The limits of time and human strength forbid that they should go out to these multitudes, and preach the Gospel to them individually and separately in their respective places of abode.

Pulpit preparations and Sabbath and week-day services, and the pastoral care of the flock of Christ committed to them, must needs take all their time and strength.

They are the leaders of the people; it is for them to plan and direct, instruct and stimulate, and lead on the hosts of

God to victory; but there will be no great victory if they are left to fight the battle alone.

We may not, therefore, expect them unaided to accomplish this great and important work.

Nor may we depend entirely, or chiefly on the men of the Church.

I believe that they might do more than they are doing. That they might carry their religion into the daily business of life—into their stores, and shops, and offices, and make its living power felt in all the channels of trade; *that they might talk more about Jesus, and less about some other things, and their own hearts would be the richer and the world the better for the effort.*

But this work must be done in the homes of the people, and during the hours of the day, when the men of the

Church are engaged in business—business that they may not leave.

Our theories may be perfect, but the great fact stands out before us—*The men of the Church have not in the past, and are not now doing any large part of this work*, and we may not rely upon them entirely for its accomplishment in the future.

Great reliance has of late been placed on hired missionaries.

Hundreds have been employed, and thousands of dollars have been expended. But these workers in the past have been mostly men, and they have gone into the homes of the people, to find the men absent at their work, and the women and the children alone.

Under these circumstances, frequent visits have not been deemed advisable, and they have gone on to other localities

equally destitute, so that the moral force of their visits has in large part been lost, and they have done little more than explore the field and reveal its utter destitution.

In mission churches and market-places, where they have been able to gather the people together and teach them publicly, the fruits of their labor have been more abundant and manifest. But only a few of the perishing multitudes, who throng the ways of death, can be reached in this way.

Something more than preaching is needed to meet the demands of the times.

*A thorough system of personal religious effort in the homes of the people must be secured and maintained, to reach the masses.*

To accomplish this work under a paid

system, would require thousands of workers, and millions of dollars. A force and an amount the Church is not likely soon to have at her command.

*All the instrumentalities we have considered have an important place and part in the great mission before us, and may not be dispensed with, or in the least depreciated.*

But I would introduce a new agency, with special claims and qualifications for this particular department of the Master's work, *viz.* :

*The systematic, voluntary labors of Christian Women, under the direction of the regular pastorate.*

More than two-thirds of the entire membership of the Church are women.

That they have a place and a work in the Church is not doubted, and that they possess qualifications of a pecu-

liarily valuable character for religious effort in the homes of the people, is freely admitted; but the Church has given them no specific work.

It seems strange, that in the stir and effort of society for its own renovation, and the movements of the Church for the evangelization of the masses, that they should have been so long overlooked and unemployed.

The world needs just such a presentment of religion as the women of the Church can make.

Not teaching nor argument, but *the presence of a simple, positive faith; words of Christian testimony and experience; a spirit of sympathy and love.*

Before such a presence, doubt and scepticism would give way, passion and prejudice yield, and human hearts soften to receive the truth of Christ.



Multitudes are perishing all around our costliest churches for lack of just such words of sympathy and love as the women of the Church can and ought to speak.

Men are not reached through their heads, but through their hearts, and women know the most direct channels to the human heart; and their ready tact prepares them to make the most of unexpected opportunities to work for the Master.

A few months ago, a Christian lady passing down one of the streets of Camden, N. J., met a drunken man.

The Spirit suggested, "You might speak to that man." But the cross was heavy and the duty unusual, and she allowed him to pass without a word.

Her heart condemned her, and she remembered that God was greater than her

heart, and he would condemn her also ; and she resolved, that if ever she should have such another opportunity she would speak.

She had not walked one square till she met a young man, and he was intoxicated.

As he came staggering toward her, she said, "Young man, I want to speak with you."

He stopped and straightened himself up before her.

"Oh, I am so sorry to see that you have been drinking," she continued.

But he answered, "I don't drink much."

Men never do drink much till they get down into the gutter, and can't get up again.

"I am sorry you drink at all, can't you give this up?" And before the

interview closed, it was arranged that she should visit him the next afternoon at his own house.

She found him awaiting her coming the next day, and he was sober now, and an intelligent listener.

Before the visit was over he had promised to abstain from drink, and to go with her that very evening to the church.

At the appointed hour he accompanied her to the church, and before the services had closed he was kneeling at the altar, and she was kneeling beside him pointing him to the Saviour of sinners.

Shortly afterwards he was brought to the knowledge of the truth in Christ, and his name was registered on the church book.

The Lord has wonderfully qualified women to go into the homes of the

people, and sit down by the fireside, or in the family group, and talk of Jesus, and duty and heaven.

They can go without restraint, and they will be received with confidence.

Their ready tact and generous sympathies fit them to go among all classes.

The palaces of the rich, and the hovels of the poor, are alike open to them, and they will receive a gracious hearing anywhere.

They too will find the men absent, and the women and the children alone. But instead of this being an embarrassment, it will be a gracious opportunity.

The home is their sphere; they know the details of its work, and understand its interests as men cannot.

The labors and trials of the wife and mother are understood and appreciated

by them, and they can give the necessary sympathy and counsel.

In many homes there are other lessons to be taught, lessons that lie at the very foundation of *home comfort*, and involve the first principles of Christian instruction, as a ground-work for decent living, and Christian faith.

The industrial pursuits of the domestic circle, the moral and physical training of children, and the duties and privileges of religious home life, are lessons greatly needed in many of the homes of this land.

*Women mould society in its very beginnings.* The family is much as the mother makes it.

Christian women have power in their own homes, and will be welcomed to other homes, where men would not be received.

They may teach the needed lessons where men could not obtain a hearing.

They may go down to the lowest dens of vice and infamy that pollute the earth, and whisper words of love and hope to the fallen and broken-hearted ones, and win them back to truth and purity.

It is not "by enticing words of man's wisdom" that these wandering ones are to be brought back to God, but by Christian love; *such love as moved Jesus when he went about doing good.*

Such a manifestation of Christian love is needed in many a darkened home, where sin and sorrow, where disappointment and death, have brought down human pride, and lacerated human hearts and left them bleeding and sore.

"The world has cheated me with its empty show, and I have wandered far away from my Father's house, and have

been living on husks," said a beautiful lady of wealth to a Christian woman, who although a stranger, took the trouble to visit her in her affliction, just after the funeral of her husband.

In her sore need they bowed together in prayer, and she sought and obtained of God peace and comfort.

This Divine love is needed by scores and hundreds of young men and young women, who have left their mothers' graves and their mothers' counsels far behind them, and are wandering on in the paths of sin and folly.

It is needed in prisons and almshouses; in the city and in the country; by the rich and the poor; everywhere by the struggling millions who find no rest for their souls, and are fainting and perishing by the way.

And in the eyes of the world there is

no higher manifestation of the Divine love than that exhibited by Christian women in their efforts to relieve the needy and rescue the fallen.

Women are more gentle in their approaches, and have more skill in introducing the subject of religion than men.

This may be illustrated by an incident or two.

A zealous, talented minister of New Jersey, passing through a wood one day on horseback, chanced to meet a countryman with a team and loaded wagon. Anxious for the salvation of souls, and unwilling that such a favorable opportunity should pass by unimproved, he rode up to the stranger in a dashing way, and exclaimed in a loud voice, "*Prepare to meet thy God!*"

The poor countryman, surprised and terrified, began to plead for his life.



“For God’s sake don’t kill me,” he cried. “I’ve not a cent of money.”

The minister was equally surprised to find that he had been mistaken for a “highway-man.”

It is needless to add that the result was far from being satisfactory.

Not long since, during a revival season in one of the churches of P——, the irreligious in the parish, and especially the non-church going, were visited and invited to the special services.

In a division of the labor, it was arranged that two of the men of the church should call upon a notoriously wicked woman, who kept a drinking saloon not far from the church, and talk with her on the subject of religion.

They confronted her in her saloon, surrounded by her wicked companions, and opening up the subject at once, they

told her of her wickedness, her danger, her duty, and warned her "to flee the wrath to come," and offered to pray with and for her.

But her eyes blazed with anger. She denounced them as hypocrites, wanted none of their prayers, ordered them out of her house, and cursed and railed, till they were glad to get out of the hearing of her voice, and the hooting and laughing of her companions.

A few days afterwards, two of the women of the church determined to visit her, and try their skill in winning her to Christ.

After making several calls in the immediate neighborhood, they went to the door of her residence, which adjoined the saloon.

The woman met them at the door with a look of surprise, but Mrs. C——

put her at her ease at once, by saying pleasantly :

“ We are visiting in this neighborhood, and have taken the liberty to call and get acquainted.”

At this her countenance changed, and seemingly well pleased, she conducted them into her best room, and talked freely and cordially.

Conversation for a time was allowed to drift, but after a while the subject of religion was introduced, when of her own accord she confessed that she was a great sinner, and wretchedly unhappy.

She had been a Sunday school scholar in her girlhood, and she wept bitterly as she spoke of those happy, innocent days.

At her own request they all knelt down together in prayer, and in broken accents she cried, “ God be merciful to me a sinner.”

The power of love prevailed. Before they left the house, she had determined to change her business and her manner of life, and give herself to Christ and the Church.

This spirit of love and tenderness of manner gives women a great advantage.

The wicked do not need to be told of their wickedness and warned of their danger, so much as *they need to know that Jesus loves them, that the Church cares for them, and that religion means heart and life, purity and love to God, and love to our fellow-men.*

Women have not only the heart qualities needed for religious work in the Home Field, but they have the time and ability demanded for the successful prosecution of this great mission.

Of these I will speak at length in another chapter.

Having decided upon this much, that *the great work of evangelization must be wrought out in the homes of the people, and mainly by the women of the Church,* plans of work may be considered.

## PLANS OF WORK.

As the Christian Church is the centre of Gospel light and power, all our plans must cluster around it.

1. Each church must decide upon the limits of its parish, perform its own work, and develop and direct its own workers.

I would not be understood as depreciating union efforts among Christian denominations, but on the contrary as encouraging unity of purpose and oneness of spirit in all things, and a union of force and material strength in the general movements of the Church. But in

parochial work, union of effort is rather an embarrassment than a help.

There may, and ought to be co-operation and agreement, as to the division of the field among denominations, or churches of the same denomination in a given locality, but for efficient and long-sustained effort, the people must be under the leadership of their own pastor.

The Sabbath lesson and the week-day's work must go hand in hand.

Rev. Dr. Fowler, in an address before the Reunited Presbyterian General Assembly, said :

“ The time has come for considering evangelization indispensable to piety. It does as really belong to it as devotion.

“ Every man, woman and child in our communion should feel as much bound to do and give what they can for the conversion of the world, as to read the

scriptures and pray. And we ministers ought to accept the promotion of the work as a part of our official task.

“ We have regarded it too much as outside of our sphere, and sometimes as an intrusion upon it. . . .

“ The time has come to assume it as our business, to enlist the people in evangelization, and to lead them on in it, to look after its interests in our parishes, and urge its claims, and secure its supplies.”

We must get away from the idea that preaching is the only duty of ministers, and come to recognize them as *leaders* and *pastors*.

No one has so commanding a place and influence, and can arouse the dormant energies, and develop and employ the latent powers of a church as its own pastor.

2. There must be an organized working

force in the church, under the direction of the pastor.

A place and a work for every one, and each individual must be made to feel a personal interest and responsibility.

A writer says, "Every church has its corps of working members, found in the Sunday school, in the prayer meeting, on committee of visitation, who are prompt to respond at the call of their pastor to any religious service or benevolent effort which he may designate.

"They are the working bees of the hive. Their hearts are warm, their zeal steady, and their hands strong.

"They love the work of God. It is their meat and drink. Were it not for these earnest warm-hearted Christians, the ice would accumulate upon the Church, until ere long it would become a frozen mass."



Yes, there are a faithful few in each church; but their efficiency has been impaired, and their efforts are spasmodic and uncertain, for lack of organization.

And especially has some simple practical plan of organization been needed to hold the women of the church to specific work according to the time and ability they have, and to press it upon them as a personal responsibility, while it brings them all into a common compact and affords the stimulus of aggregated results.

But I quote again from Rev. Dr. Fowler's address:

“And has not the time come for *organizing woman's work*? It is invaluable now, but it is not systematic. Each does what her heart prompts, and her immediate circumstances permit. No scheme of service is constructed by us, and no special training furnished. She

teaches, when so inclined, in Sunday and industrial, and other charitable schools, and visits the neglected, and relieves the needy and suffering; but it is only as an incident in her life, and on her personal motion, and according to her convenience, and in such way as she may devise or discover or learn, and without more than such a general preparation as she may happen to have or acquire. It is wonderful that with such desultory modes she should have accomplished so much. Nothing but the compassion of her nature could have been adequate to it. The Church is full of women sighing for work. They need occupation and desire usefulness. But they know not what to do. There is no employment open to them, except of an occasional and casual character, nothing to keep them steadily engaged, and that taxes their powers

and principles and raises their ambition. They need a species of profession, some arrangement by which they shall be prepared for labors of love, and introduced into them, and made regular and persistent in them. We would not separate them from society, or take them from their homes; but those of them who are comparatively at leisure, might be gathered into societies, in which they shall associate for methodical work."

When the organization of a working force is secured, and the limits of the parish decided upon, the field may be subdivided into smaller districts, and two or more members of the church appointed to each, whose duty it shall be to visit from house to house, and ascertain and meet the religious needs of the people as far as possible.

These visits are repeated from month

to month, and from year to year, as the visitors may judge will be useful and acceptable.

The results of their work may be reported in a meeting held monthly for consultation.

The pastor will thus be enabled to understand the demands of his parish, and will have an opportunity to give direction and counsel to the workers.

The Church needs the reflex influence of aggressive Christian work.

Thousands in the Church are dying, *spiritually dying* for lack of work; and just such work as would keep their own faith alive, would save the perishing multitudes around them.

But the pastors are the leaders, and the Church will look to them and follow where they lead.

A faithful captain does not, when in

an enemy's country, keep his *whole force in camp all the while*, but leads them forth to the conflict.

The Church is a fort in an enemy's land, and we are the soldiers Christ has sent out to conquer the enemy and reclaim the country, and we are to go forth to the battle.

No attempt should be made to proselyte from other denominations holding like precious faith in Christ, but all should be urged in the direction of their religious preferences, to consecrate their lives to the service and glory of God.

The visitors should become familiar with the religious condition of all within their districts, and secure their good will and confidence. For this reason the districts should be small.

The work should be long-continued and thorough. The indifferent should

be urged to seriousness, the careless warned of danger; the penitent pointed to Jesus; the stranger invited to the house of God; the wanderer reclaimed; the sick comforted; the forsaken consoled; the fallen lifted up; the children brought into the Sabbath school; the naked clothed; the hungry fed; and whatsoever the hands find to do should be done with our might, with prayer and thanksgiving.

The example and the results of such work would lead others to devote themselves to Christ and his cause.

*If the leading Evangelical denominations in the land, had an organized force of twenty in each of their churches, women who would give one afternoon in each week to personal Christian effort in the houses of the people, the whole field would soon be canvassed.*

But there ought to be a larger force. The whole Church ought to be enlisted; and in obedience to the command of Jesus, “*Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in.*”

When the Church shall organize her whole force, and when pastors shall teach that “faith without works is dead,” and shall lead their people from the Sabbath sanctuary out into the wilderness of week-day sin—out into the homes of the perishing multitudes, in aggressive Christian work; and when *the women of the Church*, as well as the men, shall be made to feel that there is something for them to do, that their faith must bring forth fruit, and shall go forth in the spirit of the Master to do the Master’s work,—then, and not till then, will the masses be reached and evangelized.

## CHAPTER III.

### ADAPTATION OF WOMAN TO HOME MISSION- ARY WORK.

BY REV. I. W. WILEY, D.D.

EVERY consideration that can be urged why men should be workers together with God in saving souls, and advancing his kingdom on earth, is equally strong and available in urging the same duty and privilege upon the women of his Church. Common participants in the blessings of redemption, equal gratitude should bind them to equal labors, each in their peculiar fields of labor and according to their peculiar capabilities. The Gospel announces the



great principle of equality as regards religious privilege and blessing. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye all are one in Christ Jesus." John Angell James beautifully observes respecting this passage: "Here is woman's charter of all the blessings of salvation; here is woman's proof of equal consideration in the sight of God; here is woman's claim to her just rank in the institutes of man. Christianity places the wife by the side of her husband, the daughter by the side of the father, the sister by the side of the brother, at the altar of the family, in the meeting of the church, at the table of the Lord, and in the congregation of the sanctuary. Male and female meet together at the Cross, and will meet in the realms of glory."

With this sublime equality in privilege and destiny comes an equality of obligation. Not that the same labors shall be performed by the different sexes, but that both men and women, with their peculiar endowments and according to their opportunities, shall alike industriously and gratefully labor in the vineyard of the Lord.

May we not say also that a peculiar debt of gratitude, and special inspiration to labor for Christ, rest with woman, in view of the manifold characteristic blessings conferred on her by the Gospel?

The uniform effect of Christianity has been to emancipate and exalt woman. Not by fulsome adulation, or chivalric and insincere flattery, but by benign and practical arrangements.

For her the Gospel has abolished polygamy, and dignified and guarded mar-

riage; has rebuked licentiousness; has taught and enjoined the highest description of purity—purity in thought and feeling, as well as in action; thus exalting this highest virtue, so characteristic of the good woman, into the typical virtue of the race.

Whatever Christian women enjoy in the happiness of home, in the endearments of social life, or in the respect which they receive, and the estimation in which they are held in this Christian age, and in Christian lands, may all be gratefully ascribed to the Gospel of Christ, which scatters blessing and joy wherever its hallowing and gladdening influence extends. If, then, any are called to be willing and active workers for God, surely women are so called by the loudest voice which can appeal to the

conscience of an intelligent and responsible creature.

But our object is not so much to speak of duty as of capability. Indeed most of our duties are determined by our opportunities and capabilities. That woman is richly endowed with qualities of person, mind, and heart to make her a powerful agent for good in the home, in the social circle in which she moves, in the Church even, all understand and admit.

The very name of wife, mother, or sister gives her an elevated place of power and influence for good. But it is of woman's capability of working for Christ outside of home, and outside of the Church even, that we now wish to speak. Has she any call to be a co-operator with men in carrying the Gospel to the people? Has she any peculiar capabili-

ties, especially fitting her to assist the minister of the Gospel and the men of the Church in reaching the outside masses and bringing them to Christ?

We believe the Creator has endowed her with just the qualities that are pre-eminently needed in this work, and the absence of which, to a great extent, in the practical working of plans for the evangelization of the masses, has been hitherto a source of weakness and failure.

In our day more energetic work must be done for the masses outside of the Church; the Gospel must be carried to them, and they must be invited to the Church. Their misconceptions of the Church, and of Christian people must be corrected; their prejudices must be removed; they must be made to see and feel their part and interest in the Re-

deemer's work and love; their sense of being uncared for, neglected, not wanted by the Church, must be made to pass away, by the Church coming to them and manifesting her concern for them, and her profound desire to do them good. The Church needs this vindication. The world this hour has no greater want than the spectacle of a living, working, Christian people, full of the spirit of the Divine Redeemer, going about doing good. Before such a spectacle, the prejudices and misapprehensions, the materialism, and the scepticism of the people would melt away, as the frosts and snows of winter before the heat of the vernal sun. This want is not met by the mere multiplying of churches, whatever may be their character, by large donations of money, or by magnificent schemes of charity.

It is a personal want among the people, and can only be met by the personal ministrations of Christian workers.

This is the work to be done. We must see them at their homes; we must take Christ with us, and show him to the poor, to the wretched, the sinful sons and daughters of men. And not to these only. It is not only the poor that need these personal ministrations, and this practical manifestation of the spirit and meaning of Christianity.

Well-to-do mechanics and their families, prosperous merchants, young couples just commencing the career of life, unchristian homes into which sorrow or death has entered, present the same need; some of them by the misconceptions and prejudices they entertain toward the Church; some by mere habits of indifference and neglect, which would

be removed by a few words of personal interest and Christian kindness ; some by the favorable opportunities which Providence has opened in their homes for putting in a word for Christ.

What an unworked field is here, from which might be gathered a glorious harvest for Christ.

But it is a field that can only be worked as Jesus himself worked it in his own day ; by the personal presence, the warm hearts, and the willing hands of Christ's disciples. It cannot be done by proxy. No amount of money can hire it done. Christians themselves must do it. Christian men cannot exempt themselves by merely giving their means, and employing the missionary ; Christian women cannot exonerate themselves by saying it ought and will be done by men.

But our main point just now is to show



that this obligation rests upon the women of the Church as well as upon the men.

As in an engagement on which the fate of nations depends, every element of strength is placed under tribute, and every department of the service is found in its place, attending to its prescribed duties, so it is in the spiritual conflict which is now in course of being waged. No part of the Christian host can be dispensed with; and more especially is that part of it required to be at the post of duty which possesses qualifications of the most effective character. That qualifications of a peculiarly valuable description are possessed by woman, and qualifications that must have been intended to do important service, will plainly appear.

Among these we notice, first, woman's faith. The faith of woman is quick, spontaneous, sincere, complete. It is

more intuitive than that of man; it does not stop to reason, it depends less on evidence; it is not weakened by doubts or by apparent difficulties. It does not wait to determine how "these things can be," but accepts them fully and with entire satisfaction, because the Word of God declares they shall be. With the heart woman believes unto salvation. Her faith in the Bible, in Christ, in Redemption is complete, and she rests in it. But little disturbed by theological controversy, not unsettled by varying theories, not startled by novel discoveries, she believes and enters into rest. God, immortality, eternity, the eternal blessedness of the good, the awful destiny of the wicked, are to the Christian woman living realities. She has unwavering faith, too, in the power and certain success of the Gospel. Her generous and sympathetic na-

ture also instinctively embraces in her faith the possibility of the salvation of men and women of all classes and conditions. None are too poor, or too wicked to be outside of the reach of her sympathy and faith.

It is just such a faith as this that society now needs to have manifested in its midst. Among the poor and wretched, in the homes of the desolate and sorrowful, in the society of the worldly and frivolous, even in the haunts of crime and wickedness, the appearance of godly women full of this simple, realizing faith, and breathing the tender spirit of the Gospel, would be almost like a new revelation of the blessed Christ to the doubting, suffering, or world-enchanted children of men. It is this faith of woman that would give her ease, gracefulness, tenderness, and confidence in her ap-

proaches to the people. Her mission would be not one of mere experiment, trying to solve the problem of reaching the people in their homes by the Gospel, but would be one of love, and faith, and hope; it would be a mission not to argue and convince, but to bless and convict by the manifestation of her own faith and the blessedness which it secures.

The scepticism and the prejudice of the people would melt away before this manifestation of a genuine and real faith in their homes and in their presence.

Women's quick susceptibility is an admirable quality in her character, adapting her to this work of personal visitation. It is this that gives her such quick perception of the fitness of things, enables her so readily, and with so much delicacy, to detect human sorrow and human need, and to minister to them with such

considerate address. It is this which fits her for the various positions in domestic life, which she fills with a skill so perfect, that the very secret of its success lies concealed in her own heart. It lies at the foundation of her pure and simple faith, making her more sensible to Divine impressions than man is; it makes her more quick in apprehending the truth presented by the Word of God, and through the operations of the Holy Spirit, and usually enables her to exercise a nicer discrimination in reference to it, and to catch more correctly and fully its spiritual lessons—consequently, her conviction of the evil of sin and the misery which it entails upon men and women are stronger than that which is usually possessed by man. It enables her to have a more vivid perception of the provisions made by redeeming love, and of the

privileges flowing from it. She perceives the readiest mode of gaining access to the hearts of those whom she would benefit, and at the same time exercises a power of persuasion which frequently prevails where sterner qualities have proved insufficient.

This quality of her nature would give her an address and skill in accomplishing the object of her mission, far surpassing the ability of man. She could find her way in the privacy of their homes, to the secret sorrows and aspirations of hearts that would be sealed up against the ruder approaches of men. She could enter as a welcome visitor houses that would be locked against the mere official visits of the missionary.

Surely in so richly endowing woman's nature with this delicate susceptibility, and this intuitive power of discrimination

and quick adaptation, God intends it to be employed in the furtherance of his kingdom among men.

Closely allied to this susceptibility is woman's love and sympathy.

In these qualities she approaches more nearly than man the nature of him in whom manhood is perfected, and consequently could more nearly imitate him, a large part of whose wonderful ministry consisted in personal ministrations to the sorrows and necessities of those around him. It was his profound and obvious love, and his far-reaching sympathy, so manifest in all his life, that drew the people so near to him, that made their homes accessible to him, that inspired the sinful and the sorrowful with so much confidence in their approaches to him. It was his possession of this highest type of human nature, manifesting even a

womanly susceptibility and tenderness, that found such sympathetic responses in the hearts of the women that followed him, and awakened in them such heroic and enthusiastic devotion to himself. One of the purest and sweetest instances, manifesting the intuitive and complete response of woman's heart, to the love and sympathy in the heart of Jesus, was that of their spontaneously bringing their children to him. Though to the disciples, made of sterner stuff, and less in unison with the loving nature of their Lord, this seemed to be a useless and annoying movement, to the women it seemed the most natural thing in the world, and was instantly responded to by the Redeemer in the exclamation, "Let them come."

In these qualities of her nature, then, she is closely allied to the blessed Master. So natural is it for her to feel for the



suffering, that an unfeeling woman is a reproach to her sex. And in these elements of her nature lies her great strength.

This makes her presence and kindly aid essential in the chamber of affliction, so that her place there cannot be filled by any substitute which wealth can purchase.

This bids her welcome to the habitations where sorrow has burst its flood-gates, that she may dry, as she only of all human comforters can, the streaming tears. Where man's hard nature and wise but chilly counsels would but make grief more intense, woman's loving spirit and words of simple-hearted kindness have often assuaged its bitterness, and she gently wiped those tears away.

In a recent number of a widely circulating periodical an instance of this

power of woman is narrated. A Christian lady, living in one of our large cities, was passing a gin-palace just as the bar-keeper was thrusting a young man into the street. Perceiving him to be very young, but haggard and excited, she laid her hand upon his arm, and spoke in a gentle loving voice, asking what was the matter. He started and turned quickly around, became paler than before, and trembled from head to foot. He surveyed the lady for a moment, and then said with a sigh, "I thought it was my mother's voice, it sounded so strangely like it; but she has been dead for many years." A short conversation followed, which comprised a confession of sin and degradation on his part, and some tender and encouraging counsel on hers, as she told him of God's love. By this time the

door of her house had been reached and they parted.

A few years after, a stranger called on this worthy woman; at first she did not recognize him, but he soon made himself known as the person whom she had that evening accosted.

From that hour he had changed his course; he repented of his sins and returned to God, and from being a degraded profligate became a prosperous and happy man.

The lady's words on becoming acquainted with the result of her simple effort are beautiful and suggestive. "Thank God! I never dreamed there was such power in a few kind words; and surely ever after this I shall take more pains to speak them to all the sad and suffering ones I meet in the walks of life." And will any Christian woman say, "I will

not soothe the sorrows of the all but broken hearted; I will not use for the benefit of my stricken sister, or my bowed down brother, that loving and sympathizing nature with which God has gifted me?"

Nor must Christian women forget that the peculiar position of esteem and respect which they hold in Christianized society, is a talent which may be used for the glory of him whose Gospel has secured it.

Though physically weaker than men, and less courageous, perhaps, to meet dangers and oppositions, yet they have abundant compensation for this in the respect and courtesy that nearly all men and women yield to virtuous womanhood. They can go without fear of insult or repulse where men could not. Boisterous and rude men, reckless and abandoned

women, are accustomed to hush their riot, and conceal their wickedness in the presence of the true woman, and will receive from her with respect rebukes and entreaties to a better life, when these are given in the true Christian spirit. Doors that are insolently closed in the face of Christian men, will be respectfully left open for the entrance of the pious female on her errand of good statements and exhortations; tracts and books will be quietly received from the hand of a woman, that would be denied or debated, refused or thrown aside when offered by men. Surely this power and influence is not conferred upon woman to be exercised merely in the home, or to exhaust itself with the politeness and courtesies of social life.

Women must remember, too, that a large share of this outside work of the

Church must be done in the *homes* of the people, where the female visitor will find the wife and the mother and the children much more frequently than the husband; and in these will find an audience on which she can distil a more gentle, subtle and persuasive influence than man could. The wearied wife, the anxious mother, the lonely woman, often feeling that she is forgotten by the world, and neglected by the Church, will open her heart and life to the gentle Christian woman that has taken the trouble to visit her. She can talk to this female visitor as she cannot to the pastor or the missionary; she has a listener who can understand her and sympathize with her, who is familiar with the peculiarities of temperament and frailties of disposition of which a man can know but little.

We often think that the hearts of wo-

men must sometimes really yearn to hear Christ declared by woman's lips, to catch the inspiration in all its delicacy from a woman's heart. Her acquaintance with the workings of the female mind, and with the circumstances in which her sisters are placed, gives her in these homes a vast advantage over the visitations of men.

But we need not pursue these thoughts further. Many more elements of special adaptation in the character and circumstances of woman, to fit her for eminent success in personal efforts to save souls, and extend the benefits of the Gospel to the masses, will occur to the reader.

We are sure society has no greater ally in the cause of civilization and Christianity than that of woman, true to the innate tenderness and purity of her sex, going forth with a cultivated intellect

and a sanctified heart, to be a blessing not only in her own home, and by the example of a holy life in the Church, but to teach to others and in other homes the invaluable lessons of a living Christianity. Whether male or female, let us work with all our might for him who has redeemed us, and who will publicly and richly reward his devoted and faithful servants.



## CHAPTER IV.

### A PLEA FOR CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S WORK.

THERE are thousands of earnest Christian women in the Church, who have the spirit of the Master, and who are ready to engage in his work, if the way was opened up before them.

They are not idlers in the vineyard; whatsoever their hands find to do, they do with their might, and wherever they move, a little circle is hallowed by their influence. But their efforts are necessarily circumscribed and spasmodic, as the Church has given them no specific work.

What they have done has been done outside and independent of the Church.

In their Dorcas and Benevolent societies, they have gone forth in the name of Philanthropy, instead of Religion, and the Church has lost the moral influence of their good deeds; a loss she cannot very well afford.

We might learn a lesson at this point from our enemies.

The aggressive power of the Roman Catholic Church, in this age, is her women.

Ninety-nine out of every hundred proselyted to that faith, are brought to her altars by her women.

When Vincent de Paul and Madame Le Grass developed the plan of a band of working women in the Romish Church, under the title of "Sisters of Charity," they did more to promote her material interests, than if they had given her a kingdom, and hosts of armed men to defend it.

It was not, however, till the Reformation had humbled her pride and shattered her power, that this call was made upon the women of the Romish Church.

They had lived idle, secluded, aimless lives; had done little for the Church, and the Church had done still less for them, until the Reform movement made her willing to accept any instrumentality.

For more than two hundred years this band of workers have gone on, gathering strength and numbers in every land, till their fame has become world-wide.

They are, in an important sense, the aggressive power of the Church.

Take from her this element of strength, this power for propagandism, with all its living, working appliances, its asylums and schools and hospitals and orphanages; take from her this mantle of charity, which covers her multitude of sins, and

hides her hideous deformities, and there would be but a dead unsightly carcass left.

We will do well to remember that the efforts of this corps of women for the propagation of their peculiar dogmas, and for purposes of proselytism, are directed mainly towards the Protestant Church, or more wisely to the children of the Church.

And here I will diverge to say that *there never was a greater folly, or abomination in Israel, than that of Protestant parents sending their children to Catholic schools.*

It is making them to pass through the fires of Moloch. And yet thousands of the children of the Church are sacrificed annually on this altar.

But to return. It would be unjust to admit that Protestant women were want-

ing in the elements of character needed for religious work—in self-sacrifice, self-consecration, and spiritual power.

I am prepared to assume and maintain, that if the way was opened up before them, they would exhibit a higher type of Christian charity, and do greater work for their Master, than their Catholic sisters.

During the recent civil war it was my privilege to be connected with the Christian Commission, and to superintend the work of a corps of Christian women employed by them in hospital service.

These women, *nearly two hundred* in number, were sent out, two and two, into the hospitals along the front lines from Richmond, or before Richmond, to Vicksburg.

And as I went from one little band of workers to another, and shared with them

the dangers of *contagion, and malaria, and shot and shell, and witnessed their devotion to God and humanity, I learned what self-consecration, and self-denial meant in its deepest sense.*

There was no shrinking from cross-bearing and duty: no faltering in the presence of dangers and difficulties; but with the same moral courage and enthusiasm that characterized the martyrs in the midst of the flames, they stood among the wounded and the dying to tell the story of the Cross, and point the perishing to Jesus.

They were noble Christian women, many of them ladies of culture and high social position, who had left homes of luxury to labor among the sick and wounded.

They were indeed Angels of Mercy, in the hospitals before Richmond, where

thousands of the sick and wounded were gathered, and where the screaming shells, came over every little while to remind them of the nearness of the enemy's batteries.

And in Knoxville and Nashville, when the rebel forces had cut off all communication and supplies, and were pouring in shot and shell from every quarter, they stood calmly during those long, dark, bloody days and nights, amidst the rain of fire and lead, to minister to the wounded and suffering.

There is now, as then, a large class of women in the Protestant Church whose hearts are all aglow with Divine love, and who are ready to make any sacrifice for the cause of Christ and the good of humanity; and who would, if they had an opportunity, vindicate their claims to the highest type of Christian womanhood.

The silence of the Church ; the absence of well-devised plans ; the formal presentment of religion by the mass of its votaries, and the *cold scrutinizing gaze* of many who profess to be followers of Christ, but who regard an earnest out-going spirit of Christianity as peculiar and fanatical, have effectually barred the doors against thousands of women who would otherwise have devoted themselves to missionary work in the home field.

Poor, weak human nature, shrinks from the crucifixion of unauthorized work, more than from any well-defined duty the Church could impose.

The Church must move forward, for she is the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, that must lead on the hosts of God to victory.

The failure of the Church to recognize and employ women in the work of evan-



gelization has kept in comparative idleness, more than one-half of her effective force, and by far the most valuable for personal ministrations in the homes of the people.

This great undeveloped, unemployed power, which now lies dormant in the bosom of the Church, paralyzing her energies, might become a mighty enginery for good if properly combined and directed.

And one of the most significant and hopeful signs of the times is a disposition on the part of all Christian denominations, to consider plans for enlisting, and systematically employing this element of strength.

The Church cannot reasonably expect to keep pace with the quickened activities of the world, with more than one-half of her effective force unemployed.

Yes, worse than idle, for many of her

women are giving their time and energies to the work of the world.

The Church has failed to employ them, and "Satan, who finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," has set them to hemming ruffles, and frilling their garments, and frizzing their hair, and many of them are in full chase with the Christless multitudes after the follies and fashions of the times.

So that instead of an aggressive power, going out from the Church, to overcome sin, and conquer the world to Christ, a tide of worldliness has set in upon the Church, obliterating distinctive lines, and we can hardly tell where the Church ends and the world begins.

We come upon the stage of life at a time when the activities of the world are being quickened; in an age of intense earnestness and social energy, when all

the forces of life are being brought into position, and the watchword is, Action! Action!! Action!!!

The world is combining and engaging her entire force; the women of the world are assuming an important part of her work, and exerting a wide-spread influence in evil courses.

WORK OF THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD.

If we may judge of women's ability to work for Jesus, by the ability they show in the work of the world, by the influence they wield in evil courses, we are forced to conclude that they possess almost unlimited power for good.

*Facts* are better than arguments, when the facts are known. Let us look at well-known facts.

Two of the largest "Emporiums of Fashion" on this side of the Atlantic,

centres of influence that control the outlay of millions of dollars, and control the time and thought of multitudes in and out of the Church, *are owned and managed by women.*

Some of the largest theatres in the country, where multitudes gather nightly for entertainment, *are owned and conducted by women.* Others equally large and expensive are now in course of erection.

More than one-half of the actors upon the stage are women; and they are not there as mere assistants, or ornaments, but to take a leading part. And so potent has their influence become, that they largely control the public amusements of the age.

The time was, when boys played women on the stage, and men dealt in whiskey, and tobacco, and did the dirty

work of the world generally; but those days are past, and women are assuming their full share of the devil's work.

*One of the largest and lowest circuses in the land*, and other smaller ones, are owned and managed by women; managed in all their horrid details, including that of training and governing wild beasts, and men and women of baser and fiercer passions than even the beasts of the field.

*Some of the largest gambling saloons, tobacco manufactories, whiskey and other distilleries, are owned and conducted by women.*

How a woman, who has anything left of the refinement and delicacy of a woman's nature, can pollute and be-draggle herself in gambling hells and tobacco slums, or how, with a spark of a woman's soul left in her, she can take

the corn that ought to go to make bread for the hungry poor, and superintend it through all its processes, till it comes out liquid fire to kill and destroy, I cannot understand; but the facts are before me.

And thus we might descend, step by step, to the lowest dens of vice and infamy that pollute the earth, to find women systematically engaged in evil courses, and showing wonderful energy and ability in the work of the world.

Now, I am not ready to admit, that women have ability for evil only. I confess with shame their wrong-doings; but I claim for them *larger ability for good than for evil.*

And so universally has this claim been conceded, that grossness, profanity, infidelity and drunkenness in women are considered an outrage upon their womanhood.

And why? Because delicacy, purity, faith and sobriety have always characterized them, and the violation of these well-known laws of their natures excites surprise and alarm.

If women, then, forced out of their legitimate sphere into fields of work so uncongenial to them, can wield such power, what may they not do when called to the higher ministries of life for which heaven has so peculiarly and richly endowed them?

I believe that there is now lying dormant in the Church, in the person of her women, the very element of strength that could most successfully be wielded against the strongholds of the adversary.

Every city, and almost every village in the land, is being canvassed for evil purposes by the women of the world; why may they not be canvassed by the

women of the Church in the interests of Christ and humanity?

The women of the stage hold their audiences nightly till a late hour, with stories of love and murder; why may not the women of the Church tell the story of Jesus and his love—the love that gives victory over death and the grave?

The changed times demand greater activity on the part of Christian women.

Let us not deceive ourselves, or ignore the logic of events.

We are in the midst of a terrible conflict, and we are to conquer, or be conquered. We must oppose with our whole force the world and overcome it, or the enemy will come in like a flood and overcome us.

“It is a little mortifying,” says a Christian writer, “that the world should have been actively discussing the sphere



of women in social and civil arenas for a score of years, before the Church should be fairly waked up to the necessity of inquiring what she has to gain in the investigation of this question as regards herself. . . .

“A great force has been lost in the Christian warfare of the world, by ignoring woman's power, and woman's weapons.

“As a great army needs its scouts, its pickets, its skirmishers, its infantry, its cavalry, its rear and van guard, so the army of Christ just now emphatically needs all arms of the service, wherewith to meet the hosts of sin and degradation.

“Who does not know that the present practical aspirations of the Church require labor that woman alone can perform effectively?”

Keeping up the figure, I may add that

the battle must be carried into the enemy's camp. The heavy artillery of the pulpit is too far away, and too elevated in its range to reach the masses.

The infantry forces must be brought into action, and an advance made all along the line; the contest to be successful must be at close quarters, a hand-to-hand fight in the homes of the people.

Christianity comes to women with stronger claims than to men, because they are more spiritual, and have larger ability to apprehend its deep meaning and respond to its demands.

Were evidence needed to sustain this statement, it would be found in the well-known fact, that more than two-thirds of the Church are women; or in that other well-known fact, that more than three-fourths of the inmates of our prisons and penitentiaries are men.

*The great need of the world, is not that women should become more like men, but that men should become more like women.*

Certainly, not like the empty-headed, deformed creatures of fashion, who bury themselves in a heap of finery, and whose thoughts and affections rise no higher than themselves, or the "puss in boots" who dangle attendance at their will.

But like true women, whose faith and love and sympathy take in all the world.

Who postpone self to consider the needs of others, and who, in their meekness and charity, go down like white-robed angels to the fallen and broken-hearted ones, to whisper words of love and hope, and to weep with those who weep.

More like them in all the heart qualities that fit true women for the higher ministries of life.

The Lord in Eden, when the guilty pair stood trembling before him, recognized the higher spirituality of the woman when he gave the promise of salvation through her.

And when the time had fully come, and the promise of the Father was about to be fulfilled, she proved herself worthy of the high trust committed to her, by her fidelity to Jesus when all men had forsaken him.

I have often thought that the heart of the Blessed Christ must have been comforted, as he looked down upon the little band of women, who, careless of the mocking multitude, gathered so lovingly about the cross during the bloody agony of the crucifixion.

Nor does it seem strange that he should reveal to a woman, first of all, his risen glory, and send her out with the first

glad message of salvation through a crucified and risen Saviour.

The records of the ages show, that much of the benevolent work of the world has been done by women

The glory of her presence has brought joy and gladness to many of the dark places of the earth, in the years of the past.

And she still stands the guardian angel of man's spiritual destiny; and if humanity is ever uplifted from the slums of passion and appetite, to the dignity of Christian manhood and womanhood, woman, in the hands of the Divine Redeemer, must be the chief instrumentality.

The sainted Bishop Thomson said: "It seems to me that one-half of the Christian Church has not as yet been brought into action except very imperfectly; and yet it is able to act, and

act more efficiently than the force already engaged.

“ Why not bring it into action ? Every thing seems to invite the whole force into the field.

“ Woman has a potent influence in the Church, and upon the world in her present relation ; but how much greater that influence might be.

“ It seems to me that this is just what the Christian Church needs at the present crisis ; to bring the women into more active relation to society, and especially in the Church.”

The systematic employment of women in benevolent and Christian work, is a felt want in the Church, and their superior ability and fitness for such labor, well understood facts.

And when the Christian Church, heeding the providential indications of the

times, shall recognize them as *a part of her working force, and provide ways and means for their employment, and give full scope to their spiritual powers*, then, and not till then, may we hope to see the dawn of the millennial glory

## CHAPTER V.

### THE FOLLIES AND EXCUSES OF UNFAITHFUL PROFESSORS OF RELIGION, DISCUSSED.

THERE are multitudes of women in the Church who are doing little, or nothing for Christ and humanity.

They look out upon the fields white unto the harvest, but when the Spirit comes to them saying, "Why stand ye here all the day idle? Go into my vineyard and labor," they begin with one accord to make excuse.

A lack of *time* and *ability* is pleaded, and the demands of God are set aside for the claims of the world.

The family, society, or business takes



up all their time, and occupies all their thoughts.

Strongly intrenched behind these excuses, they spend their lives in idleness, or in the service of the world.

But just here, I desire to be distinctly understood in regard to the sacredness of home claims.

*I believe a woman's first duty is at home, and that no woman ought to feel herself called upon to go into other fields, until her home work is done, and done well.*

The obligations resting down upon the wife, and mother, and sister, and daughter are very sacred, and may not be set aside for anything else.

I go still farther, and claim that the home work of the women of the Church ought to be done *a great deal better than the home work of the women of the world.*

Religion has done very little for them, if the inner circles, in which they move, have not felt its power, if it has not made them better *wives* and *mothers*—better in all the relations of life.

This much accomplished—the home work done, and done well—they are invited into other fields.

“Then I shall never go!” will be the response of many a weary wife and mother. “I have so much to do at home, that if I do my home work and do it well, I will have no time for anything else.”

Of this each one must judge for herself; but before so important a matter is decided upon, it should be carefully, and prayerfully canvassed in the closet.

It has been said, and said truly, that  
• “A woman’s work is never done.”

There are so many things that women

can do—they have sought out for themselves so many devices—that no woman can do the one-tenth part of “woman’s work.”

The women of the world are obliged to discriminate; they can only undertake part of the work. Surely the women of the Church can do no less, and the true line of discrimination for them must be between the necessary and unnecessary work. And if careful adjustment is made, they will find that a large part of their labor may be dispensed with.

The time spent by the women of the Church in *dress* and personal adornment—in useless and ornamental work—is almost incredible.

It tires one even to think of the frilling, and flouncing, and tucking, and braiding, and trimming, and embroidery, put upon their garments

And of their handiwork in silks, and worsteds, and wax, and paper, and hair, and leather, and shells, and mosses, and beads, and ribbons, and flowers, and feathers, there is no end.

I have known women in the Church to spend months of precious time over a piece of embroidery not much larger than a lady's pocket-handkerchief, and the while make excuse that they had no time for Christ's work.

What a spectacle for heaven to look down upon!

A woman in the Church, bearing the precious name of Jesus, busy with such trifles—weaving with fingers that will soon be cold in death, gossamer threads that will not bear the washing or the wearing, while sinners for whom Christ died are perishing all around her! While hearts are breaking, that she might bind

up—while feet are wandering, that she might lead to the pearly gates—while weak ones are falling, that she might lift up and guide to immortality!

What a fearful position!

Reader, dare you venture to the judgment with such an excuse?

What then shall I say of the frilled and elaborately trimmed dresses, over which thousands of the women of the Church are spending so much of their precious time?

The bit of embroidery is wrapped up in a napkin, and covered away from the light, may be, with the one talent of the owner; but the frilled and gaily wrought garments are worn out into the street, and into the Church, and become a stumbling-block to the poor, and a snare to the vain.

Now *for every frill or flounce on a*

*lady's dress, if it is well made, it takes from eight to fifteen thousand stitches to put it there.*

It may then be set down as a rule, that the women of the Church who are so elaborately trimming their dresses, *if they do the work themselves, will have no time for Christ's work; if they hire it done, will have little money for benevolent and Christian enterprises.*

A young lady, who was recently converted, and who gave up these vanities by giving herself fully to Christ, told me that in the days of her worldliness and folly, it had taken two women two weeks to flounce and trim one of her dresses. "But," she added, with a look of relief and satisfaction, "I am done with all such trouble and vexation; henceforth my time and money shall be given to Christ and his work."

Would that all who profess to love Jesus, and to have given up the world, would follow her noble example.

For the excess and extravagance in dress of many of the young women of the Church, is not only contrary to the plain teachings of the Word of God, but a violation of the dictates of *common sense and refined taste*.

They load themselves down with chains and trinkets and ornaments, till they look more like the women of heathendom, than like the angelic beings in whose pure society they hope to spend an eternity.

An artist would justly forfeit his reputation, if he were to represent any one of the Christian graces, or a celestial being, in the outlandish and cumbersome garb of a modern belle of the Church.

Not long ago, assisted by a distin-

gished minister of Brooklyn, I made a calculation of the amount of work on a dress of a lady of the Church.

We measured a little distance, and counted the stitches, and then measured round and round, and reached our conclusions very much as astronomers compute the distance to the planets and the fixed stars.

We found to our astonishment that, *after the dress was made, it had taken 52,000 stitches to make and put on the flouncing and the trimming.*

We may not expect that the women of the Church who are giving themselves to these vanities will find time for Christ's work.

Many a husband has said, "Don't ask my wife to do anything for the Church, or the poor. She has enough to do at home, she is killing herself as it is with



over work." And he has spoken the truth. But the unsophisticated husband does not see, that her work is ruining his children, cursing the world, and blighting the Church; that she is sacrificing her all to Fashion.

Month after month, and year after year, the worldly women of the Church toil on, for the personal adornment of themselves and their children, till heart and flesh fail, and an untimely grave covers them out of our sight.

A MARTYR TO FASHION, would be the most truthful, if not the most appropriate epitaph that could be written on their tombstones.

Many a professedly Christian mother has wrapped her enfeebled infant in embroidered muslins and flannels, into which her own and her child's life blood have been wrought.

In many a professedly Christian home, the first lesson a child learns, is how to dress in the prevailing style.

It leaves its cradle admiring its fine clothes, and suffers hours of torture and trial from curling papers, and crimping pins, before it has learned to say, "Now I lay me down to sleep."

It is not surprising that the tender twig, bent world-ward from the very first, should turn from the Church to the opera, the theatre, and the ball-room.

A few years ago, a young girl in such a home as this, was deeply impressed by her pious Sabbath school teacher with the importance of giving her heart to Jesus.

But while she was seeking salvation, her mother, a worldly minded professor of religion, determined to send her to a dancing school.

The poor child threw her arms about her mother's neck and begged with tears to be excused from going, as she felt that it would be wrong. And her brother, an irreligious young man, was so moved by her tears and arguments, that he interceded in her behalf. But the mother persisted in her determination. "For," said she, "our position demands it; we are wealthy, and it is necessary that my daughter should acquire the graces and accomplishments that will fit her to shine in fashionable society."

A few years passed, and the young girl had become the gayest of the gay.

Parental authority had compelled her to take the first lessons, and now the theatre and the ball-room were her especial delight, and parental control was not strong enough to check her in her head-long course.

A climax was reached lately, by the young lady eloping with a worthless, graceless scamp, who had nothing to recommend him but his ability "to trip the light fantastic toe."

The foolish mother had "sown the wind and she reaped the whirlwind."

"We cannot serve two masters." "If we love the world, the love of the Father is not in us."

We may say that we do not love the world, that our affections are not upon its vanities; but *if its trappings are upon us*, and we are giving *time and money* for worldly display, and *sacrificing moral principle* for worldly position and esteem, we deceive ourselves. Actions and words must accord, the profession and the life must harmonize.

"She leads a ladies' prayer-meeting beautifully," said a distinguished minister,

speaking of a leading lady of the Church ; “ but,” he added, with a sigh, “ she wears enough diamonds to start a missionary society, or build a church, and her shawls would run a benevolent society for a year.”

But it is argued : “ It does not matter what the outward adornings are, so the heart is right.”

*True ; but if the heart is right, and is kept in proper frame, everything else will be set right.*

The outward life is the index to the heart.

As the hands upon the dial-plate indicate the hour of the day, so the outward adornings and words reveal the advance of the soul in spiritual life.

But there is a still higher moral aspect to this question.

When we come into the Church we

take upon ourselves the vows of our holy Christianity, vows more solemn than any oath, in any earthly court.

Before the Lord, and the great congregation, we renounce the devil and all his works—the vain pomp and glory of the world—and consecrate our souls and bodies a living sacrifice to God.

And accept thus publicly the Scriptures as the rule of our life and practice.

But many, like Ananias and Sapphira, have *kept back part of the price*, and have stood before the altar to *perjure themselves by assuming vows that they did not intend to keep*.

Not long ago, I was present at a baptismal service. Among the candidates, a young lady presented herself at the altar, arrayed in all the extravagancies of the prevailing fashion.

Her dress was befrilled from top to

bottom, and her overskirt was looped up over an immense pannier, in a most bewildering style.

There were no less than three chains about her neck; her ears were dragged out of shape by very showy pendants, that almost touched her shoulders; her wrists were ornamented with bracelets, and her fingers with rings.

But the most complex and showy part of her costume she carried upon her head.

Although her neck was slender and her head small, an immense chignon displayed its well-rounded proportions; over and around this excrescence of fashion, a mass of curls and frizzes spread themselves in every direction; mingling freely with the flowers and ribbons of an elaborately trimmed hat, the crowning glory of the whole, on the pinnacle of

which a full-blown rose and a full-grown butterfly rested in quiet beauty.

The solemn service went on, the holy vows were assumed, and all was in readiness for the application of the water, "the outward sign of an inward work."

But when the hats of the lady candidates were removed, I saw, to my dismay, that the immense excrescence on the young lady's head covered the entire scalp, leaving no room for the application of the water after the usual mode.

"What will the minister do?" I questioned, mentally. "Will he baptize that excrescence of fashion, or will he baptize the woman? And if he applies the water to that mass of frizzed hair, belonging, may be, to some one under the sod, will that be a valid baptism—will not that, rather, be a *baptism for the dead than the living?*"



It was a moment of intense interest to all, when the minister stood before her, for it was very manifest that he did not see his way out of the difficulty at once. However, after a moment or two of perplexity, with one hand he raised her head, *and with the other he applied the water to her face.*

And now I ask, *Can any one in the immediate violation of the obligations of the Church, and without any purpose to live new lives, take these solemn vows without moral perjury?*

Whatever may be the answer, it will be admitted, that if the true women of the Church would stand up in their moral integrity, and reprove sin and worldliness by a positive Christian life and influence, no woman of the world would dare present herself at our altars in the garb of a devotee of fashion.

But we have not contended for “the faith once delivered to the saints.” We have not “lifted up the voice like a trumpet.” And we ought to blush with shame, when we see the vanities and sins that now despoil the Church, and make it a show-room of fashion.

#### THE CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH.

Multitudes of the children of the Church appear on our streets, and in our Sabbath schools, bedecked and beplumed like the veriest butterflies; till their little heads are turned, and their little hearts swell out with pride and vanity, leaving no room for thoughts of Jesus and Heaven.

No wonder that in the midst of such a display of *fluting, and flouncing, and frizzing, and sashing*, that *dress* in many of our Sabbath schools is the *central thought*.

The mothers who are thus extravagantly dressing their children, are not only fostering feelings of pride and vanity, that may ruin their own dear ones, but they are *closing the Sabbath school doors against the children of the poor.*

They cannot come into the presence of these gaily-dressed children of fashion and bear the scrutiny of their laughing, prying eyes; and they stay away.

And, in many cases, the only door leading heavenward for them—the only window that would let in the light of truth—is closed against them, and they are left to drift on in the slums of vice in which they find themselves—to drift down, to ruin and to death.

Mechanics and laborers, who toil all the week long for the bread they eat, and are denying themselves many of the comforts of life, that they may lay by a

little, to put a roof of their own over their heads, will not spend their hard earned money, if they are wise, in plumes and furbelows for their children; and if they go to the Sabbath school at all, it must be in plain clothes.

They go, to find themselves, too often, in the midst of a gaily dressed company, and come away wounded and humiliated, and seek their associations elsewhere.

What answer will these vain mothers make, when the Judge of all the earth, in whose sight these poor neglected little ones are as precious as the children of a king, shall require the blood of souls at their hands?

If all the weak, vain mothers in the Church, could, by any possible means, be induced to lay aside these plumes, and sashes, and frills, and furbelows, and send their children to the Sunday school

*plainly dressed*, the movement would increase the attendance, and advance the spiritual interest of the Sabbath school cause, more than all the speeches and conventions imaginable.

And this evil, which is sapping the life of our Sabbath schools, is extending to the Public schools of the land, and is more to be feared than the combined powers of the Papacy.

The Sabbath school is the chief corner stone of the Church, and the Public school the chief corner stone of the Republic.

And as long as the *masses*—the *poor* as well as the rich—can enjoy the benefits of these two grand institutions, we need not fear for Christianity, or Liberty.

Dr. J. W. Alexander, writing of the worldliness of the children of the Church, says :

“As I grow older as a parent, my views are changing fast as to the degree of conformity to the world which we should allow in our children.

“I am horror-struck to count up the profligate children of pious parents, and even of ministers.

“The door at which those influences enter, which countervail parental instruction and example, I am persuaded, is yielding to the ways of good society. By dress, books, and amusements, an atmosphere is formed, which is not that of Christianity.

“More than ever do I feel that our families must stand in a kind but determined opposition to the fashions of the world, breasting the waves like the Eddystone light-house.

“And I have found nothing yet which requires more courage and independence,

than to rise even a little, but decidedly, above the par of the religious world around us.”

## EAR-RINGS.

Of all the vanities and absurdities of fashion that have crept into the Church, none perhaps is more useless and ridiculous than that of wearing *ear-rings*.

No part of the human body is so little affected by the ordinary changes of life as the ear.

If allowed to stand in the place where God put it, it is erect, shell-shaped, translucent, and delicately beautiful. But Satan has defiled the earth, and put his mark upon the most beautiful and enduring things.

It has been a custom in all ages for stock-growers to put the mark of their ownership on the ears of their animals; and the Beast, very early in the history

of the world, soon after Eve was driven out of Eden, managed to put his mark on the ears of woman.

It may, or may not, be *the particular mark* of which John speaks, but very clearly it is *a mark of the Beast*. It is not God's mark,—the ears are not pierced at the command of the Master, and to promote the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

We read that when Jacob went up with his household to Bethel, to build an altar unto God, that at his command, "They gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hands, and all the ear-rings which were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem."

The controversy thus successfully inaugurated by Jacob 616 years after the flood, against this satanic and bar-



barous custom, has been kept up till the present day. But Satan still holds woman by the ears, and the more besotted and degraded a nation or tribe, the heavier the badges of his power in the ears of their women.

This relic of barbarism has come down to us, and many of our women bear the marks of the Beast, and display the badges of his ownership; and their ears, the perfect and beautiful creation of the Divine hand, are pierced, and mangled, and dragged out of shape and despoiled of their beauty.

The rich and the poor, the lady in her silks and the beggar in her rags, are alike the victims of this deforming and barbarous custom.

But ear-rings are not only a mark of the Beast, and a relic of the gross barbarisms of the early ages, but lead to an

extravagant outlay of money that belongs to other purposes.

This evil has crept into the Church, and thousands of women go to the communion table with *the money in their ears that ought to be in the missionary box, or educating some poor orphan child*; for there is enough treasure in the uncircumcized ears of the women of the Church, to send a corps of missionaries to every nation under the skies, and enough spent annually to sustain them in their work.

Or, turned into another channel; there is enough to build an Orphan House in every State in the Union, and enough spent annually for ear-ornaments, to support all the needy orphan children of the land. So that, in truth, they go to the *Lord's table with the price of souls in their ears.*

“But,” say some, “I have weak eyes, and my physician advised me to have my ears pierced.” But did he advise you to heal the wound as soon as possible and wear heavy ornaments?

Looking around us we might suppose that we had a nation of weak-eyed women; for most of the ladies I have spoken to on the subject complain of weak eyes.

Now, no intelligent physician will claim any merit for this remedy, unless the ears are kept sore and discharging, and I observe that most ladies heal them as soon as possible; and indeed it would be a pitiable sight to see one-half or two-thirds of our women going about with sore ears.

If piercing the ears is such a sovereign remedy for the eyes, why do not men receive the same treatment?

But the fact is, young girls want to look womanly, and old women want to look girlish; and women with round faces want them to look long; and peaked-faced women want theirs to look broad; and many women want to look beautiful; and, like the women of heathen lands, who color their teeth and paint their eyelids, and tattoo their faces, and imagine that they look beautiful, so our women imagine they are adding to their personal charms, when in truth they are only making themselves ridiculous in the eyes of men and angels.

Those who have carefully looked through the Church will agree with me, that there is no one article of dress, or ornament worn by woman, which draws the lines more closely, and definitely, between worldly professors of religion

and the active spiritual Christians of the Church, than *ear-rings*.

Many, I will admit, who have higher aspirations than dress and display, but *who lack the moral courage to stand by their convictions*, are lashed into these vanities by the dogmatic spirit of the world.

For it requires a martyr-like courage to resist the overwhelming tide of worldliness coming in upon the Church; and the higher the social position, the more strongly the claims of the world are insisted upon.

False ideas prevail in regard to the privileges of Christians who enjoy wealth and position; for they are supposed to be released, in some way, from the moral obligations and restraints, in regard to dress and display, that bind others in the more common walks of life.

## LADY WASHINGTON.

Lady Washington, who was perhaps the most charming and accomplished woman that has ever occupied the Presidential Mansion, had the courage to maintain in that exalted position, the simplicity of dress and manners that had always characterized her.

There were, however, in that early day, those who loved dress and display, who found fault with Mrs. Washington's plain ways. After due consultation they determined to call upon the wife of the President and insist upon greater ceremony and splendor. We quote from a widely circulating journal an account of the interview :\*

“One morning three fair dames appeared at the Government House; they

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\* *Harper's Bazaar.*

were dressed out in the utmost gayety and splendor, as if nature had formed them merely to carry finery and trinkets.

Diamonds sparkled in their ears, and glittered on their necks. Their hair was puffed out, frizzed, crimped, and tortured in every form but that of nature's elegance. They wore also high head-dresses, adorned with artificial flowers and nodding plumes and fluttering ribbons, to crown the edifice of hair which fashion then decreed should encumber their heads and brains.

Their hands were emblazoned with rings, their wrists encumbered with ruffles, clasps, and bracelets. Stiff muslin rose like foam around their chests and shoulders; and though their rich brocaded silks fell in costly folds about them, and partially hid the pressure that gripped in their waists, yet the oppressed

heart had to sympathize with the oppressed brain overweighted with fashion's load.

They came rustling and fluttering into the presence of the lady they sought. She received them in a plainly-furnished room, in which she spent her mornings.

With dignified courtesy the thoughtful matron rose to greet her visitors.

Her well-filled book-case, made for use, not show, was behind her chair; her table, with her work-basket and materials before her; and in her hands her knitting-needles, the useful companions of many lonely hours.

Gravely, yet most courteously she heard the remarks which with faltering speech they had come to make. For they did not find it so easy to speak of luxury and display, as desirable, when they were face to face with the noble woman who,



through years of anxiety and privation, had ministered to the wants, and mitigated the sufferings of the soldiers during the terrible struggle for independence.

Somehow their faces lost the defiant air and vain simper they had worn when they first entered her presence, and had deepened into seriousness and respectful attention as the wife of Washington, after hearing them, said :

“Ladies, you came to advise me, and, as far as kindness prompted you, I am obliged for the motive, though I cannot act on your suggestions.

“You are in the bloom of life. Many years I trust are before you. My age, even more than my station, sanction my giving you some advice.

“Dear ladies, suffer the word of exhortation. Should Christian women, honored wives and mothers, be content to aim at

no higher glory than that of the insect that glitters in the sunbeam—to be as the fire-fly, or the humming-bird?

“You spoke of the greatness of my husband. His dear mother ever looked well to the ways of her household. She taught him to be industrious by her example, for the spinning-wheel spun the clothes he wore from his earliest days; and she, like myself, loved the knitting-needles.” (She looked, as she spoke, at her knitting.)

“Ladies, during eight years of ceaseless struggle, the women of America, the mothers of the land, spent no money on finery for themselves. They spent all their available means in providing clothes for the army, which, but for that succor, must have perished in our long and bitter winters.

“I do not wish to boast; I did only my

duty; nay, I know it was my privilege, as Washington's wife, to toil for the men under his command.

“I always went into winter-quarters with him. In summer time, I and his mother and my friends were at our spinning-wheels. Once in the winter, I had sixteen looms under one roof, all weaving cloth—coarse indeed, but warm for the soldiers of the nation.

“Trust me, woman was made for nobler ends than merely to display finery, which mars rather than improves the graces that nature has bestowed.”

“I know,” said one of the ladies, thoughtfully, “that Mrs. Sarah Bache, the daughter of Benjamin Franklin, sold her ornaments and all she could spare to commence a fund, which other ladies in Philadelphia were induced to aid both by hand and purse. They made, I remem-

ber, 2200 shirts in one season for the army."

"Yes, dear young ladies, the example of Franklin's daughter influenced the less thoughtful, but not less kind-hearted ladies of the city.

"One faithful woman—how much she can do to check the influence of luxury and folly! Our countrywomen before the troubles had grown fond of foreign fashions, and it was feared that, as we depended for luxuries on Europe, the patriotic desire for independence might be checked by a cause so trivial, and yet so dangerous, as the frippery of female fashions.

"Mrs. Warren, I remember, did good service to the cause of liberty and truth, when in a poem she wrote, she satirized her countrywomen's love for dress."

"That poem," said another lady, "was

one suggested by the remark of a friend of hers: that all articles of foreign commerce should be dispensed with, except absolute necessaries. I remember Mrs. Warren amusingly put a fancied list of articles an American lady could not dispense with; I forget the words, but—”

“I can find them,” said the lady President, reaching her hand to a book on the shelves behind her, and after a little search, coming to the words:

“An inventory clear

Of all she needs, Lamira offers here

Some lawns, lutestrings, blonde and Mechlin laces,

Fringes and jewels, fans and tweezer cases;

Gay cloaks, and hats of every shape and size,

Scarfs, cardinals, and ribbons of all dyes,

With ruffles stamped, and aprons of tambour;

Tippets and handkerchiefs at least three-score.

Add feathers, furs, rich satins, and duCAPES,

And head-dresses in pyramidal shapes.

So weak Lamira, and her wants so few,  
Who can refuse? They're but her sex's due.  
In youth, indeed, an antiquated page  
Taught us the threat'nings of a Hebrew sage  
'Gainst wimples, mantles, curls, and crimping-pins;  
But rank not these among our modern sins.  
*Our* minds and manners are well understood,  
To settle in a stomacher and hood."

The poor ladies, as the inventory was read over, looked down at their dresses with dismay. Almost every article enumerated they were wearing.

Impressed, not offended, they left the presence of the noble matron, bearing her words in their minds, and it is to be hoped her influence in their hearts; for she gave not merely the precept of the lip, but the example of her life.

Mrs. Washington had the moral courage to follow her own deep conviction in regard to dress and display, and in doing so she won the respect of all.

And if the women of the church in this day will follow her example, and take the Bible for their guide, they will find that their usefulness will be greatly increased. They will have more *time* for Christ's work, *more money* for generous enterprises, and more *spiritual* and *physical strength* to labor in the Master's vineyard.

## CHAPTER VI.

### TIME AND ABILITY FOR CHRIST'S WORK.

LIFE may be woven with a double thread; we may work for God while we earn our daily bread.

There are opportunities on every hand; and if the Spirit accompanies the effort, a great deal may be accomplished in a very little while.

At home, in society, by the wayside; wherever we go, we may work for the Master, while we perform the hard everyday duties of life.

*A word may save a soul.* We do not know when to speak the word; we can only go on speaking as we have opportunity, and leave results with God.



An incident in my own experience, showing the power of a few sentences, may not be deemed amiss in this connection.

In 1863, just after the fall of Vicksburg, I visited the hospitals in Helena, Arkansas.

Going into a large ward one day, filled with sick and wounded soldiers, I saw in the farthest corner of the room a very sick man.

I noticed him the more, because he was looking towards me, and there was upon his face such a look of agony and despair as I had never seen on any human face before, and trust I may never see again.

I said to the surgeon, who had stepped in with me:

“You have one very sick man here.”  
And when I designated him, he answered:

“Yes, he is almost gone—poor fellow, he’ll not live long.”

I said no more—my heart was too deeply touched—but went directly to him. As I approached his cot-side I said tenderly, “You seem to be very sick, my friend.”

The look of agony deepened in his face as he answered:

“*My friend!* I have no friend. I am here dying among strangers, and nobody cares whether I live or die.”

“Oh, don’t say that. You have many friends in the North;” and I was going on to say, “I’ll be your friend,” but I remembered how empty such a profession of friendship would be on the part of a stranger, and instead, I said: “There is a *Friend* that sticketh closer than a brother. Can’t you make *Jesus* your friend in this dark hour?”

When I spoke the name of Jesus he cried aloud :

“Oh, would that Jesus were my friend; but I am a great sinner.”

“But Jesus is the sinner's friend.”

“O lady! You don't know what a wretched sinner I am, to what lengths of wickedness I've run, or you would not think that Jesus could save me.”

But I answered, “You don't know what a great Saviour we have, or you would not doubt. He is the mighty God, and is able to save to the uttermost; and that means, that *he can save you.*”

“*It is too late! too late!!*” he cried, with such bitterness of soul, that the men lying upon their cots—brave young men, who bore in their own persons the marks of their heroism—covered their faces with their bed-clothes and wept like little children.

But I urged, that it was not too late, and commenced telling him of the thief on the cross; but he stopped me.

“Oh, I know about the thief on the cross; but, lady, I am a thousand times worse than the thief on the cross.”

“If you were *ten thousand times worse*, *Jesus could save you*, for he can save to the *uttermost*.”

The words gave hope, and he exclaimed, “Pray for me!”

I knelt by his cot-side, and while he cried, “God be merciful to me a sinner,” I pleaded the precious promises. And while he prayed and I pleaded, “the opening heaven around us shone,”—and the mighty power of saving grace came down upon his soul.

The tempest was stilled, and all was *peace*. I looked up into his face to see, that in a moment—as it were, in the

twinkling of an eye—all the lines of despair had been taken out of his face, and that it was beaming with joy—a joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

If I had been an infidel up to that time, it seems to me that I should have been convicted of the truth of Christianity in that presence.

There were many witnesses to this scene, and it was as though the Master would show his mighty saving power, for *He healed that man soul and body.*

Three days from that time I found him on the shady side of the house reading the Testament I had given him the day before. The same look of peace and joy was in his face, as he said :

“ Oh, I am so happy this morning! I have a *furlough*, and I am going home. How glad my Christian mother will be to know that I have found salvation.”

“Young man,” I said, “wherever you go, remember, that you were snatched as a brand from the burning.”

“I can never forget that. My disease and despair were crushing me down. I must have died, if salvation had not come just then; but when you *spoke the name of Jesus*, I knew you were a Christian, and that you would help me if you could.”

If we would speak the name of Jesus oftener, sinners would hear and be attracted to the cross.

What power, what magic in that word!

“He speaks, and listening to his voice,  
New life the dead receive.”

I dare not think what the result might have been, if I had not spoken the name of Jesus to this man.

I tremble to think, that in the journey of life I may have passed by some des-

pairing, perishing soul, without uttering that precious name.

God can use the weakest instrumentalities to save a repentant sinner.

Not long ago two ladies in P—— were visiting from house to house.

They entered a small tenement house, where they found a very sick man.

He had lived a profane and godless life, but now, brought face to face with death, he was concerned about his soul. He would have been less than an immortal being, if he could have stepped out into the dark future, without any thing to step upon, and not have been concerned.

When he learned that they were visiting in Christ's name, he said :

“ Pray, for me ! ”

Before kneeling to pray they sang :

“ There is a fountain filled with blood.”

They sang it all through. They thought they were singing it for the sufferer beside them, and they were; but they were singing it much more for a young girl, hopelessly ill, just beyond the board-wall that separated that from another poor back room.

Alone, in her darkness and despair, she listened, and she heard the voice of Christian singing. And the blessed Holy Spirit, who can use even a *song* to bring a perishing soul to Christ, carried the second verse of that song *through the board-wall*, down into the depths of her troubled soul.

She listened, and she heard the precious words :

‘ The dying thief rejoiced to see,  
That fountain in his day ;  
And there may I, though vile as he,  
Wash all my sins away.’



The Christian visitors went their way, for they knew not of her presence; but the words of the song remained—the blessed Holy Spirit lingered—and when they found her a few days afterwards, she was rejoicing in hope of immortality. Ultimately the man and his wife were brought to the knowledge of the truth, and the house was made vocal with the praises of God.

The mother, toil-worn and weary, with her little ones around her, may feel that her opportunities are limited, and her work of little importance to the Master's cause. But if the love of Christ inspires her efforts, she may sow seed that will bring forth an abundant harvest.

John Wesley, whose life and teachings have told so powerfully upon the destinies of the world, learned the lessons that made him strong and bold for the

truth from his mother. And Charles Wesley, when he sang :

‘A charge to keep I have,  
A God to glorify,’

re-echoed in song the homely lesson of Christian duty he learned at his mother’s knee.

The work wrought in the humble home may bless thousands.

Susannah Wesley toiled in such a home. At one time, when her husband was in prison, and she had but a few shillings in her pocket, and *nine* children to care for, *she found time to gather in her neighbors and teach them the way of life.*

And the faithful mother, in the midst of her wearying toil, may find *time*, when her neighbors visit her, or when she goes into other homes, to speak of Christ and salvation.

## NO ABILITY.

There are multitudes of women in the Church, who are ready to say: "*I could find time for Christ's work, but I have no ability—I am so peculiarly constituted that I never could talk on the subject of religion.*"

This excuse, I am sorry to say, is not confined to the women of the Church. There are a great many very peculiarly constituted men in the Church.

I have known men, who could plead a case at the bar, canvass a whole State, if need be, in the interests of a political favorite, make a Fourth of July oration, or do any thing in that line, but who were so peculiarly constituted that they could not speak or pray in a social religious meeting.

I have known women in the Church

who were the life of every social circle in which they moved, who prided themselves on their conversational powers, and could stand by the hour, under a blazing chandelier, the centre of conversational attraction for a whole roomful, but who were so peculiarly constituted that they could not utter a word of prayer at their own family altars, or speak to the poorest beggar about Jesus, and who at a social religious meeting were *as dumb as the dead*.

Now dare we admit, that professors of religion may have ability for everything else, and no ability for Christ's work? *Ten talents for the work of the world, not one talent for the Master's service?* We dare not admit it, it is contrary to the teachings of the Word.

They have taken upon themselves the vows of the Church, it would not do to

say that they did not understand those vows. And understanding them, surely they have the ability to keep them.

But our ability comes from God. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

If our hearts are filled with the love of Jesus, we will find some words in some language,

“To tell to sinners round,  
What a dear Saviour we have found.”

When we say that we have no ability for Christ's work, we confess our own *unfaithfulness*. For if we had gone on in the Christian life, we should have grown in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, and become strong.

A mother requested a friend of mine to pray for her husband, and her six sons, all out of Christ.

In the conversation that followed, she

confessed that she had been a member of the Church for *twenty-five years*, but that she had never spoken to any one of them on the subject of religion ; and she explained the matter by saying that she was so peculiarly constituted that she could not talk on that subject.

But why this desire for the prayers of others? Her two oldest sons, now in business in Philadelphia, are on the downward track, and ruin and disgrace are impending.

*A mother's opportunity never comes but once.*

The time was when she held those boys in her hands like wax, and might have written deeply upon their hearts the lessons of saving truth. But she was an unfaithful Christian, a worldly mother, and the opportunity passed by unimproved never to return again ; and

now her tears and entreaties are of no avail.

During a recent revival of religion in one of the churches of P——, two women sat side by side, one an earnest active Christian, the other a formal professor.

The altar was crowded with penitents, and the Spirit of God was moving the hearts of the people. Not far from them a young man, a friend of the latter, sat weeping.

“You are acquainted with that young man, he seems to be deeply moved; speak to him, and invite him forward for prayers,” said the earnest Christian to the other.

“Oh, I cannot; I never did such a thing in my life; I never could talk to any one on the subject of religion,” was the reply.

An earnest conversation followed, in which the delinquent professor acknowledged, that although she had been a member of the Church for *thirty years*, her voice had never been heard in prayer, or testimony, nor had she ever spoken to any one of her friends or neighbors on the great subject of their soul's salvation.

What a humiliating confession! What a solemn moment! It was the Spirit's last appeal—the offering of the last little cross. For the Master came to her heart that very hour, seeking fruit; and finding none, he said to her, as he said to the barren fig-tree, “Henceforth let there be no more fruit.” And she went down to her house with that fearful sentence ringing through her soul, and a crushing, blighting consciousness that she was “condemned already.”

She was almost immediately stricken



down with paralysis ; and she now lies helpless upon her bed. She never has worked for Jesus, and she feels that she never will.

And now, as she stands on the crumbling verge of time, and empty-handed looks out into the dark future, there comes up before her, in panoramic view, all the glorious opportunities she has had for the Master's work, but which she has neglected and trifled away.

In the bitterness of her spirit she cries out, as she turns from the vanities of the world which have so long enthralled her:

“Oh, what a mockery my life has been—what a blight upon the Church—what a stumbling-block in the way of sinners ! Would that I could go back and live my life over again, how differently I would spend the precious hours. But it's too late ! too late !”

It is a fearful thing to live in the Church *thirty years in idleness*—a fearful thing to stand an idler, in the way of sinners, *one year*. How many precious souls may stumble over a *dumb, idle professor of religion*, in one short year!

I was once travelling in the country, and we came to where the road divided. Just at the point where the roads diverged, there stood a tree, and on the body of the tree was a large *guide-board*.

I looked to see what was written on the board, but there was not a word. Doubtless there had been information and directions for the weary, bewildered traveller; but the storms had beaten upon it, and the writing had not been retraced, and only a few faint traces of the words remained.

I said to the Christian friend who ac-

accompanied me, how much this reminds me of unfaithful members of the Church. The lines of truth have been written on their hearts, but the storms of life and the cares of the world have beaten upon them; the heavenly writing has not been retraced, and they stand in the Church *dumb guides*. Poor bewildered sinners see no heavenly directions in their lives, and stumble on to ruin and to death.

WE CANNOT LIVE TO OURSELVES.

Service is demanded by a universal law of nature.

Even "the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God; but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned."

So we who are constantly receiving the blessings of heaven, and make no return to God and humanity, are in danger of like condemnation.

It is as though a ladder extended from earth to heaven, and the All Father reached down his mighty hand to us, to hold, and to help, and bade us reach down our hands to the struggling multitudes below us; and as we lift them Godward and heavenward, we ourselves are drawn nearer, and still nearer, to the bosom of Infinite Love.

But if we are disobedient to the heavenly calling, the hand of the Helper unclasps, and the voice of the Master is heard, saying: "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me."

One of the surest tests of discipleship, is our interest for the salvation of others.

It could not be otherwise. The very nature of the relation which establishes intercommunication between the human and the Divine, secures sympathy and unity of heart and purpose. And when the Blessed Christ, who gave himself a ransom for sinners, touches our hearts with his mighty love, we will feel some of the wonderful compassion that moved him when he went about doing good.

Princely honors, earthly pleasures and the glittering toys of wealth, will be as the small dust in the balance, when compared with the richer inheritance and higher joys of the Divine life. And constrained by the mighty controlling power of Jesus' love, we will gladly labor for the extension of his kingdom, and joyfully take up our cross and follow him.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CROSS-BEARING AND CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGE.

WE may bear a heavy cross, a cross that bows us to the very earth with its weight and crucifixion, and yet receive no power or life from it, because Jesus is not on it.

There is an old legend, that “when the Empress Helena went to the Holy Land in search of the true cross, excavations and great researches were made, and at last three crosses were discovered; but how were they to decide which was the true cross?

“They approached a dead body and laid one cross after another upon it, and

when the cross of Jesus touched the cold form it at once sprang up in new life and vigor."

I use this fable to illustrate a great spiritual truth.

When the cross of Christ touches a dead soul it springs into new life; and the presence of this spiritual life is the true test of our Christianity.

Jesus said, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

Surely the Master did not mean the rich crosses that glitter on high altars, and tower above lofty domes, or the crosses and pictures of crosses that crowd richly furnished dwellings, or the crosses worn as ornaments, alike by the rich and the poor.

*These bring no life to dead souls. Too*

often they are meaningless symbols that mock heaven and mislead men.

But there is a true cross, with a Christ upon it, that brings life and joy and gladness to dead souls.

It is the cross of doing duty when it is hard to do duty; of standing by the right, even unto the death if need be; of following Jesus although he leads through fiery furnaces.

It is the cross of yielding *heart*, and *life*, and *will* to him, and walking humbly and obediently in all his commandments; patiently toiling on in the sphere of duty he assigns; meekly and faithfully doing his will, and joyfully accepting trials *because of love to him*.

There are many who claim that they are going around the cross. But they deceive themselves. No one ever yet went around the cross; *the way is too*



*narrow.* If we would go forward, we must needs take up the cross and bear it.

When we think we are going around it, we are going backward. We may come again, and again to the same cross or another, but refusing to bear it we go backward; we go a little beaten round, but we do not go heavenward; heaven is by way of the cross.

Ah, there are multitudes in the Church who load themselves down with *sham crosses*, who hang them in their ears and about their necks, but who refuse to bear the real cross of Christ with its self-denial and its crucifixions.

*What a mockery in the sight of heaven!*

They sorrow and suffer and toil as do others, because it is a part of their life, that they may not get away from; but it is not sweet to suffer, or to labor, for *Jesus is not on their crosses.*

They are clinging to useless, Christless crosses, that in the day of eternity will be like millstones about their necks, to sink them to the depths of the bottomless pit.

True disciples find a great many little crosses in the way, which, taken up, bring life and joy to their own, and to other souls.

At the close of an ordinary service on a Sabbath day, in one of our city churches, a young lady, a stranger, was received into Church fellowship.

A Christian lady present, who was a cross-bearer, and whose heart was in an attitude to say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do," saw in that little circumstance an opportunity to work for Jesus.

Not one of the great congregation present thought worth while to stop and

speak to the young disciple. She alone lingered to give her a Christian greeting.

Before they separated, it was arranged that she should call on the young lady on the next Thursday afternoon at her own house.

The promised visit was made, and after some conversation the young lady said :

“I want you to see my mother. My father and mother are infidels, and are very much opposed to religion; but we are strangers here, and I am sure she will be glad to meet you.”

So the mother was brought in and introduced. After further pleasant conversation, the mother said :

“I want you to see my husband. He is in his studio. I will have him come down.” And soon the husband joined them.

The interview was very pleasant; but after a little while, the Christian lady felt that she ought to lift up a standard for Christ, and although the cross was very heavy, she said :

“It’s my habit to pray with the people I visit when it is acceptable.”

The gentleman’s countenance fell at once, but he said politely :

“Just as you please about that.”

The Christian lady and the young girl knelt by the sofa; the father carried a chair to the remotest corner of the room and knelt there, the mother did not kneel at all.

How the Lord does help those who undertake to bear his cross; the hand of the Helper is underneath it.

While she prayed :

“The heavens came down the earth to greet,  
And glory crowned the mercy seat.”

The mighty power of the Spirit was felt upon all hearts, and when they arose from the prayer, they were all weeping. It was some time before a word was spoken. The man was the first to break the silence; extending his hand to the Christian lady he said :

“ I'll bid you good-day, madam—*God bless you and your Church!*”

Ah! sinners and infidels respect an earnest Christianity.

Stepping out into the hall, he almost immediately returned to ask :

“ Can you not come and pray with us every week ?”

She bowed assent.

“ Then come next Thursday afternoon,” he said, and he hurried up stairs, with the tears raining over his face.

The next Thursday afternoon she was again with that family, and now they

gathered about her, a loving little group, and they all prayed, and "this man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles."

Before another week had passed by, the father and mother were both converted, and added to the Church.

What glorious results from one little cross-bearing! But this is not all.

It was my privilege, a few months ago, to see a letter from this gentleman, who is now living in San Francisco, Cal. He wrote, that as soon as he had established himself in his own house, he opened a prayer-meeting in his parlors, and that the very first evening a precious soul was converted, and that almost every week since the Lord had honored the meetings by his presence and saving power.

If we go forward bearing the little

crosses—doing the little duties that lie next to us—God will own and bless our efforts, and lead us on to greater work.

I have sometimes thought that there are no little duties in the Christian life; that every thing would appear great and grand, if viewed in all their connections with time and eternity.

I suppose that Barbary Heck, the founder of American Methodism, thought she was doing a very little thing when she went with her bucket of lime and white-wash brush, to white-wash the first Methodist church built in America—a church made doubly precious to her by her own prayers and sacrifices.

I know not how well she white-washed those narrow rough walls—it does not matter now. But it was not a little thing; by that and other simple efforts she started a wave of influence that has

spread from ocean to ocean, till every mountain and valley in this broad land is dotted with Methodist churches.

She could not lift the curtain and look down through the ages, and see the glorious results that God would work out from these little beginnings. It was not necessary that she should.

Nor is it necessary that we should see the results of our work. When we have done all that we can do, we may safely leave results with God.

We cannot labor for the Master in vain. His blessing will be upon our efforts, and precious souls will be reached and brought to the knowledge of the truth; and the reflex influence of our work will come back upon our own hearts like a heavenly benediction.

In our labors we must not limit the saving power of God *to a few respect-*



*able Church-going sinners, but go forth to all, with confidence that God can save to the uttermost.*

Christianity is a great human leveller; it knows no rich—no poor. There are none so rich that they do not need salvation, and none so poor, and low-fallen, and covered with the leprosy of sin, and the filth of society, that the arms of Divine Mercy may not reach down to the depths of their degradation, and lift them up, to be heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

And a Christian woman may go, as it were, to the very mouth of the pit, and rescue precious souls as brands from the burning.

There is no place so dark, and vile, this side of perdition, that a woman may not enter in the name of Jesus, and command a respectful hearing.

I know this statement to be true in the experience of hundreds, and have tested it in my own work; for I have been among all classes, in the palaces of the rich, and the hovels of the poor, in garrets, and cellars, and prisons, and almshouses, and drinking-saloons, and dens of infamy, and I have ever found that the most abandoned hushed their rioting in my presence.

Many and many a time have I seen the tears stream over the faces of hardened men and women as they listened to a few simple words of truth, and measured back the long distance between themselves and the innocent days of their childhood.

Over a Benevolent Institution in Europe, there is a picture representing a shivering child of poverty, kneeling on the hearth-stone over some dying embers.

She is seeking warmth, and she says, "There may be a spark left," and she blows upon them till a flame is kindled.

We are to go forth in the same hopeful spirit.

Degraded and lost to shame and all womanly instincts, as that poor fallen sister may appear, there may yet be a spark of the Divine nature left.

Lost to honor and manhood, degraded and besotted as that brother may seem in the eyes of men, there may yet remain a spark of the God-given nature, that the Spirit of Christ can kindle to a flame.

And we must go down and stand beside them, and make them feel the warm pulsations of our Christian love, and win them back to truth and purity.

These are the *treasures* we are to lay up for ourselves in Heaven.

Not silver, or gold, or costly apparel, but *souls redeemed from sin*, to be stars in the crown of our rejoicing forever.

A Christian lady in her walks among the poor and the fallen, found a young girl, in a wretched home of sin, hopelessly ill.

Surrounded by degrading influences, in a home of drunkenness, profanity and squalid poverty, she was rapidly sinking down in hopeless despair.

“Oh, death seems so near, and the grave so dark; there is nothing left for me now but a grave in the Potter’s field and a dark uncertain future,” she said, as the Christian woman took her by the hand, and kindly and lovingly talked to her of Jesus and immortality.

Step by step she led her to Christ; and it pleased the Master to reveal himself to her in a most wonderful manner,

so that she who came to teach was herself taught a deep lesson of truth. She triumphed over the fear of death—the grave was illuminated, and life and immortality brought to light in the Gospel.

The Christian lady became so much interested in her, that she said :

“ You shall not be buried in the Potter's field. I will buy you a grave, and you shall have a Christian burial.”

This seemed to be the last drop in her full cup of joy.

The lady was permitted to be with her just at the last, and witness her triumph and hear her last words. And these were her last words :

“ Be sure of one thing, when you come home, there will be *one* to welcome you at the gate of the Beautiful City.”

What a heavenly treasure !

This Christian lady says, that now,

when she thinks of Heaven, she always thinks of that young redeemed spirit awaiting her coming, and the sweet assurance comes into her heart that the Master looking at her will say, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

What glorious opportunities all around us to win precious souls to Christ, and lay up for ourselves treasures in Heaven!

But too often we tremble in the presence of sinners, and fear to speak the words of truth by which they may be saved.

We forget that they are ready to perish, and that the Master has sent us to them on a mission of mercy.

We forget the priceless worth of a soul, and the value of the religion we profess.

I learned a lesson of the power and

value of Christianity a few years ago, that I can never forget.

In 1862, just after the terrible battle at Corinth, Miss., I visited the hospitals in that place. The havoc had been fearful on both sides, and the wounded of the two armies crowded every ward.

Going into a hospital known as the College Building one day, and passing from cot to cot, I came to a young man who looked very pale, and I asked :

“ Are you sick, or wounded ? ”

He answered, “ I am severely wounded ; ” and seeing the look of sympathy on my face, he went on to tell me all about it.

It was a long, sad story, that I need not repeat all here.

He had fallen in the front of the battle line, had been taken prisoner, and had lain out all the night long among the dead ; but he said cheerfully :

“When ‘our boys’ found me, they took me up tenderly and brought me here, and now I am doing well.”

But I felt that he was not doing well, that he was on the verge of the grave, and that I must speak to him of eternal things.

He went on to tell me of his home,—of a mother and sister, and two little brothers in Benton Co., Iowa, and added :

“When I get well enough, I hope they will give me a furlough, and let me go home.”

I said tenderly, “I hope you will get well; but how will it be if you should not, are you ready to die?”

I never can forget his answer; it has been ringing through my soul all these years.

It was as though he was transfigured before me there came into his face such



light and joy as, laying his hand on his heart, he said :

“I HAVE THE COMFORTER !”

What volumes in that sentence ! I did not need to ask him, to what denomination he belonged, or when, or where he had found this pearl of great price. It was enough for me to know that he had the Blessed Comforter, which Jesus promised to his disciples.

But he went on talking sweetly of Jesus and Heaven, and the power of Christ to keep.

“Religion,” he said, “has kept me through all the temptations of camp life, and now I am ready to *live*, or to *die*. If the Master sees that it is best that I should go now, it will be as near Heaven from Corinth, as it would be from Iowa.”

It was evening time, and I went my

way. The next morning I was early at that hospital, and first of all went to look after him, but I found his place vacant.

I said to the ward master, "Where is the young man that was lying here by this post?"

He answered, "He is dead."

Oh, how his words went to my heart!

"Where have you laid him?" I asked.

He led the way out into the back yard, and there, side by side, stood the seven cot bed-steads that held the seven dead men that had been carried out the night before. He pointed out his cot, and left me alone with the dead.

The bed-spreads were drawn up over their faces, and that was all that was between the dead faces and the sky.

I drew down the bed-spread to look upon his face. I never can express the emotions of that moment. My heart

was thrilled, for there upon the dead soldier's face was the very same look of joy and peace that was on his face when he said, "I have the Comforter," and I knew that the Comforter had been with him to the last.

I could not ascertain that any human eye looked upon him in the last struggle, or that any human hand had soothed him in his agony; but I knew that Jesus had sustained him—that the Comforter had been with him till the last.

I wrote to his mother, telling her the sad story of his sufferings, and the sweet, sweet story of his Christian triumph. After awhile an answer came back to me. She did not know that he was wounded or dead, until she received my letter. His death was a heavy blow, but she rose in Christian triumph above

her great sorrow, and in closing her letter said :

“ My son may not come back to me, but I shall go to him ; and it is just as near Heaven from Iowa, as it was from Corinth ; and *the same Comforter that comforted my son when wounded and dying among strangers, comforts me now.*”

What a glorious Christianity we have ! A religion that can keep, under the sorest trials, that can comfort in the deepest agonies, and that can give joy and peace in the presence of Death, and *leave its Divine stamp upon the dead clay.*

#### WHAT A PRICELESS HERITAGE.

The women of the nineteenth century, rejoicing as they do in the light of Christian civilization, will do well to remember that this priceless heritage was bought at a fearful cost of life and effort, and was

baptized in its infancy with the tears and blood of women.

It is a precious legacy, too precious to barter back to Rome; too costly to waste in idle, or useless living.

The privilege of reading God's Word, and attending the house of prayer, so lightly esteemed by many professing Christians in this age, cost the women of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries agony and suffering too deep for human words.

Thus it has been, and ever will be, when innocent blood flows for the religion of Jesus, women suffer most, and their prayers, and tears, and hearts' richest treasures mingle in the purple current.

How zealously then should we guard this rich heritage of religious liberty; how earnestly and faithfully labor to

build up the temple of truth, and spread Scriptural holiness over this land, and all lands; that peace and love may abide, and the sword be forever turned away from our own hearts, and become to the husbandman a useful implement of toil.

Are we not daughters of a King, with an eternal kingdom just before us, and crowns of glory almost within our reach? What have we to do with the trifles and vanities of this life?

Let us not spend our time as do others, and waste our substance in useless display, and riotous living, but give ourselves unreservedly to Christ and his work.

## CHAPTER VIII.

TRACT DISTRIBUTION—WOMEN'S WORK IN  
HEATHEN LANDS—DRUNKENNESS AMONG  
WOMEN.

MUCH has been said and written about the distribution of tracts ; but the Church is slowly learning the truth, that these leaves of healing must be accompanied by human sympathy, and applied by the hand of Christian love, to be effectual.

The indiscriminate distribution of tracts is rather to be deplored than commended. They may be scattered broadcast, till they fall as thickly as the leaves of autumn, with little or no result.

Here and there one may fall on a prepared heart, bringing a message that is suitable and helpful; but millions of pages will fall as dead leaves to be trodden under feet of men, unless they are attended with personal religious effort.

Tracts have their place and mission; but they cannot take the place and do the work of a disciple.

When Jesus said, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and the halt and the blind. Go into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in that my house may be filled," he meant something more than the giving of a paper, or the leaving of a tract at the door.

He meant that we should go in person to the perishing multitudes around us, with our hearts all aglow with Divine



love, and the glad tidings of salvation on our lips, to be "living epistles, known and read of all men."

He meant that we should come down to their circumstances, and sympathize with their distresses; that we should bring to them a present experience of the Christ-life within us, and stand beside them and make them feel the warm pulsations of a love that is without dissimulation, and has no respect for persons.

He meant that we should rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep; and that we should warn, and persuade, and entreat with all tenderness and longsuffering, "to flee from the wrath to come."

Human needs must be known to be properly met; and those who offer tracts and nothing more, when religious con-

versation is possible, *sacrifice golden opportunities to blind uncertain chance.*

The times demand the presence of the best talent, and the purest faith of the Church, in the homes of the people, a demand that cannot be met by the indiscriminate distribution of tracts. And those who undertake this work, and lack the moral courage and spiritual power to do it in a proper manner; who leave a tract at the door, as is too often the case, and skulk away without knowing the religious condition and wants of the people they are trying to reach, will fail to meet the pressing demands of the age; but they will not fail to degrade this service, and bring reproach upon the cause of Christ by these exhibitions of cowardice, and lack of faith.

A friend of mine, an earnest Christian minister, had a tract thrust under his

door, entitled "An Appeal to a Drunkard." Another gentleman, whom I know, had a tract handed to him on "The Higher Christian Life." He knew nothing of the lower Christian life—he knew vastly more about theatres and bar-rooms.

The religion of Christ is brought into contempt by such bungling, half-hearted work.

But earnest, self-sacrificing Christians, who will go forth boldly to labor in the Master's vineyard, will find the fields white unto the harvest, and may gather many golden sheaves.

WOMAN'S WORK IN HEATHEN LANDS.

Great as the demand is for work in this land, our plans and efforts must not be limited to the Home Field.

The work at home must be done, but it is the privilege and *duty* of the women

of the Church to extend the refining, elevating influences of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

We stand here at the radiating centre of Christian civilization, exalted and crowned by a religion of purity and love. But just over there, our sisters are crushed to the very earth by the barbarism of a false religion—a religion that knows no purity, no love, no mercy, that tramples down every holy instinct, and degrades women to the level of brute beasts.

We, in our comfortable homes; breathing an atmosphere of love; moving freely in society, the object of attention and respect; surrounded by friends, and books, and pictures; with opportunities for study and culture; can hardly understand, or fathom the depth of their degradation.

They are *enslaved soul and body*, and are the objects of contempt and derision, and the victims of the grossest superstitions.

We owe all the blessings we enjoy to Christianity; and sympathy and gratitude alike should lead us to extend those blessings to others.

It is said that when Caesar returned after the conquest of Britain, he gave it as his opinion, that the people were so degraded and worthless that they were not fit for slaves. Afterwards, a Christian, seeing some fair-faced flax-haired girls from the British Isles for sale in the slave-market, inquired who they were. Being told that they were Angles, he answered, give them Christianity, and they will be Angels.

There was hope and prophecy in his words. To-day the fair-faced women

who speak the English language are, more than any others, the angels of man's spiritual destiny, and the hope of the women of heathen lands.

And we must go down and stand beside them, and undo their heavy burdens, and break their galling chains, and lift them up to a noble Christian womanhood.

No message of mercy sent by the hands of men can reach them.

Their feet have been made fast in the stocks of an inner prison; every soul window has been closed; every door has been barred, and they sit in the region and shadow of death, and no man, but their own keepers and the priests who have forged their chains, may come near them.

*But we may go.* God has providentially opened all these doors to us, and has written in letters of living light over

every archway: "*A welcome to Christian women!*"

Heretofore we have sent men, and they have preached to men, and the women have sat desolate and alone in their habitations of cruelty, and have not heard a word of these blessed truths.

But Christian women may go into these desolate homes, and illuminate their darkness, and make their shame and degradation to pass away by the glorious lessons of Gospel light and liberty.

And surely there is no higher mission than *woman's work for woman*. It certainly is, at home or abroad, in a peculiar sense their duty and privilege to labor for their fallen sisters.

And for this great work, which seems now committed to women, we have abundant resources if they were consecrated.

If the money that is being squandered by the women of the Church in *extravagancies and useless ornaments*, were given to send the Gospel to the women of heathen lands, a flood of light would be poured into the habitations of cruelty, and salvation would flow to the ends of the earth.

If the women of the Church had a living, God-honoring faith, and would, as faithful stewards of the manifold gifts of God, consecrate themselves and their means to this great work, they might look over the broad lands, filled with idols, and covered with gross darkness, and count the millions of women who sit in the region and shadow of death and claim them all for Christ.

But while we earnestly and faithfully labor to extend the Gospel to the women of heathen lands, we must not relax our



efforts in the Home Field. And one of the most gigantic evils that confront us at home is Intemperance.

DRUNKENNESS AMONG WOMEN.

There is no more alarming sign of the times than the increase of drunkenness *among the women of the higher classes.*

It is fearful enough to see men bloated and besotted with wine and strong drink, but drunkenness in women unsettles the very foundations of society.

It may be no greater sin for a woman to drink than a man, but it certainly is a greater social calamity.

We may not however conceal the fact, that drunkenness among women of all classes is greatly on the increase, and especially among the rich, and that there is not only wine upon the side-board and brandy in the secret drawer, but *public*

*places of resort where women go to drink.* Restaurants, whose chief attraction is "the wine list."

Fine carriages and servants in livery may be seen in attendance at the door, while the rustle of silks keeps time with the clinking of glasses.

It is really shocking to see with what a toper-like air some young ladies can handle their straws.

These places are made as pleasant and attractive as possible, and afford a delightful retreat for a social glass.

Women do not drink as men do. Men guzzle, or turn down a glass at one gulp. Women sit down by little tables, and sip, and gossip by the half hour. But the effect is ultimately the same.

There are thousands of women to-day among the higher classes, who are more or less under the influence of liquor

every afternoon, or who occasionally take a spree.

I have seen women elegantly dressed, living in palatial residences, who were so drunk that they could not get out of their carriage without the aid of a foot-man.

And I have very often seen women in street and railway cars so much under the influence of liquor, that they could not give an intelligent answer to the simplest question—mothers with little children, who could not be trusted with them in their arms, by the father, or the servants in attendance.

From physicians, who are frequently called in as advisers in the more desperate cases, I have ascertained many facts in regard to the prevalence of this evil.

But it is not necessary to enter further into these wretched details.

Is it not time that the women of the Church would wake up to these alarming facts, and *ask why this increase of drunkenness among women, and what they can do to stay the terrible tide?*

Doubtless there are several causes. The free use of liquors in the family is a prolific source. From babyhood to old age, they dose with liquors of some kind, for every little ailment.

Notwithstanding all eminent men have said and written to the contrary, the masses believe that there is medical virtue in this stimulant.

But much of the increase of drunkenness among women, I believe, may be traced to the free use of *Patent Medicines*.

Most of these compounds are liquors, variously drugged.

Taken month after month, an appetite

for stimulants is created, and something stronger is required.

From what I have been able to gather I am persuaded, that more persons are made drunkards by their use than are cured of disease.

The whole country is flooded with these compounds. They may be found in every drug store, and in almost every dwelling.

Analyzed they are usually found to be whiskey and some simple drugs.

There are some kinds of these medicines that men understand the nature of very well, and as it is much more *respectable* to buy medicine than whiskey, they keep themselves well supplied.

It is most reasonable to suppose that, as these medicines are largely used by women, they too would acquire an appetite for strong drink.

Now it seems to me that the duty of the women of the Church is very clear in regard to this whole question.

They must not only *banish liquors from their houses, but patent medicines from their closets, and bring their whole influence to bear against every form of this evil.*

There are many women in the Church who love these things more than they would like to confess; and are substituting "homemade-wines," and other drinks, and thus tampering with the serpent.

God is dealing severely with some of them. Their sons and daughters have gone beyond the occasional glass, and the homemade wine, and have been wrecked and ruined.

Surely Christian women, *who have the Spirit of Christ*, cannot look out upon

the suffering, and poverty and crime which flow as an immediate result from this cause, and allow intoxicating liquors, or anything that will create an appetite for them, in their houses.

Surely they cannot look out upon 60,000 *drunkards on a dead march, followed by nearly 300,000 women and children clothed in rags, beggared and ruined soul and body, and feel indifferent!*

Dare any woman of the Church, in the presence of these terrible facts, put the cup to her lips, or tolerate it in her house, or keep silence when 60,000 men are being murdered annually and laid in drunkards' graves, and while women weep, broken-hearted, and children cry for bread?

It was a murderer who said, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Ah! there are many saying those very

words to-day, as they look into wine-rooms, and drinking-saloons, where men and women are slain.

Who shall paint the confusion of that hour—the blackness of the despair that shall cover the unfaithful, when the Master demands these souls at their hands?

If this gigantic evil is ever checked and cured, the women of the Church must engage heartily in the work, in their own and other homes.

We must go to work at the foundations of society, must reach the *women and the children*.

We have been spending our energies, on old confirmed drunkards, while “quack doctors” and whiskey dealers were entrapping new victims.

We must go to the fountain-head of society, and save the women and the



children from their power, and when the old dealer and drunkards all die off, we may hope for enough moral sentiment to sustain wholesome legislation.

Though last in the catalogue of *work for Jesus* presented in these pages, I feel that it is not least; that there is a great mission for the women of the Church in the Temperance cause.

And now, in reviewing, let us remember that we cannot live to ourselves, that there is a work for each one of us to do, that we must do, or it will be an unfinished work forever; that there are souls to save, that we must save, or they will go down to death, and their blood will be upon our garments.

Life is short, and death is at hand. Let us not sleep as do others, but put on His strength and righteousness, and go

forth to overthrow Satan's kingdom, and extend the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ: to whom with the Father and the Spirit be glory now and forever.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THOUGHTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS

THE great question to be settled first of all, is, that we will deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow Jesus; that whatsoever our hands find to do, we will do with our might.

And when this question is settled, and there is a strong abiding purpose to perform Christian duty, under all circumstances, there will be no lack of opportunities; God will recognize our fidelity, and give us our proper place in his vineyard.

It is said of Elizabeth Fry, the Chris-

tian Philanthropist, that her daily morning prayer was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do, *this day?*" And the Master led her forth to his work; and prison doors that had been barred through all the ages of the past against the ministries of Christian women, opened before her, never more to be closed, and Gospel light streamed into dungeon cells, and made luminous the dark places of the earth.

Florence Nightingale, in a letter to a friend,\* says, "If I could give you information of my life, it would be to show how a woman of very ordinary ability has been led by God, by strange and unaccustomed paths, to do in his service what he has done in her. And if I could tell you all, you would see how God has done all, and I nothing. I have

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\* Rev. Lemuel Moss, D.D.

worked hard, very hard, that is all, and *I have never refused God anything.*”

Ah! there lies the secret of her wonderful success. *She never refused God anything.* He commanded, and she obeyed; he led, and she followed. And the doors of military hospitals reeking with human gore, that had been closed against the kindly ministries of women through all the bloody years of the world's history, suddenly opened before her—opened never more to be closed till the fulfilment of the gracious promise, “And nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

But there are many in the Church who have never settled this question—who have no abiding purpose to labor for Christ and humanity, and who may not be depended upon for any Christian work.

They take up the cross to-day, and refuse it to-morrow. They follow the Master to-day, and deny him, and follow their own desires to-morrow. They will accept no-work, unless it is easy and agreeable, and in harmony with their own views and plans.

They cannot be trusted with any great enterprise; the Master may not rely on such co-laborers for the salvation of a world. If they save their own souls, it will be "*as by fire.*"

And whatever other qualifications we may possess, our success in Christian work will depend mainly *on our nearness to Jesus, and the strength of our purpose to perform every duty, no matter when, or where presented.*

Nearness to Christ will bring all our plans into harmony with the Divine will, and fill us with the constraining love

needed for aggressive service; and a settled purpose will hold us steadily to our work. And when, with heart and life and purpose, in harmony with God's plan for the salvation of sinners, we go forth to labor, we may hope for success.

But it is important that we meet those we would benefit, on an equality; not looking up to the rich, or down upon the poor, but imitating Jesus, who bore himself with dignity in the presence of the rich and great and self-sufficient, and came down with the tenderest sympathy to the poor and the lowly.

Multitudes are perishing all around us for lack of human sympathy.

On a Monday morning, not many months ago, a Christian lady sat at her sewing-machine, busy with her work; but her thoughts were on other things.

“Faith without works is dead,” she repeated. It was the text of a sermon to which she had listened the day before, and as she sat there thinking, her heart was troubled because of her unfaithfulness.

“But what can I do?” she queried. The spirit suggested, “You might have spoken to Mr. B—, when you bought Carrie’s shoes on Saturday—it is not too late yet.”

Her thoughts were turned into another channel. She had known and traded with Mr. B—, for nearly three years, and had never said a word to him about the interests of his soul. Would she be willing to meet him at the judgment, with such a record of unfaithfulness against her? The thought startled her; she could take no such risk, and she left her work and went directly to his store.



Providentially he was alone, and addressing him she said :

“Mr. B—, I have been thinking of you this morning, and I am troubled over my unfaithfulness. I have known you for nearly three years, and have never spoken to you on the subject of religion ; and I have come to talk with you now, for I would not be willing to meet you at the bar of God, without giving you a faithful testimony on that subject.”

While she spoke, he seemed deeply affected, and when he could control his emotions to answer her, he said :

“Mrs. C—, you little know what I was thinking of when you came in : *I had made up my mind to take my own life, and I was trying to decide whether to use poison, or blow out my brains with a pistol.* But when you announced your mission, *I knew that God had sent you to me.*”

Earnest conversation and prayer followed, and he was led to abandon his evil design, and turn his thoughts and prayers to God for salvation.

But for the timely words of this Christian lady, who obeyed the suggestions of the Spirit, he might have rushed madly into eternity, as hundreds are doing annually.

We are to watch for souls as those who shall give an account, and while they are yet a great way off, meet them and help them to Christ. For we may go in the name of Jesus to the very mouth of the pit, and rescue precious souls as brands from the burning.

A few months ago, two ladies visiting from house to house, in one of our eastern cities, went into a large corner drinking-saloon, and certainly *such a place is very near the mouth of the pit.*

They found about twenty young men lounging about the room. One, with pale and haggard face, stood before the counter, just ready to receive a glass of liquor, that the bar-keeper was pouring out for him. But as soon as the ladies entered he stepped away from the bar, as though he did not want them to know that the glass of liquor was intended for him.

Mrs. D—, in a few kindly Christian words, expressed her interest in his welfare, and invited him to attend church. The same kindly invitation was extended to each one.

In the back part of the room there was a card-table, and four or five young men were seated around it playing cards; but as the ladies approached, the table was swept in a moment, and there was not a card to be seen.

They were ashamed to be caught with cards in their hands. A good lesson to many worldly professors of religion, who encourage card-playing in their families, and bring them forward unblushingly for the entertainment of company.

Tracts were offered and accepted very cordially by all.

“I hope you will read them,” said Mrs. D—.

“Certainly we will,” was the hearty response.

“I think it will be better employment than the business you are engaged in. Cards are dangerous companions.”

“Oh, we were not playing for money, but just to put in the time—we’ve nothing else to do.”

“Nothing to do in this great busy world so full of work? Then would it not be well for you to spend this precious

time in reading, and self culture, in some one of our free libraries?"

And after further Christian counsel she invited them to attend church, and the ladies took their leave.

They went up the street a little distance, but returning almost immediately they glanced in as they passed by the half open door; the glass of liquor still stood on the counter untouched, and the men were all reading their tracts.

Three days afterwards, in answer to the bell, Mrs. D— met a young man in her parlor.

"Yes, you are the very woman who visited the drinking-saloon," he said, excitedly. And when he could command his feelings to do so, he went on to tell her, that himself and two other young men left the saloon immediately after her visit.

As night came on, they sought the church to which she had invited them, but it was closed, and they wandered on down another street. They had not gone far till they heard the voice of Christian singing, and following the throng gathering for worship they entered a church. Holy influences were about them, all the circumstances invited them to a better and purer life, and when the invitation was given they presented themselves as subjects of prayer.

For three days they had been seeking salvation, without realizing pardon and peace. Sin burdened and heavy hearted they said, "If we could find those ladies who visited the drinking-saloon, we know that they have faith and that God would hear their prayers." And they went forth to seek them, and their steps were Divinely directed.

When on the evening of the third day, these two saintly women bowed with them at the mercy seat, their faith was so strengthened that they were able to claim Christ as their Saviour and to rejoice in his pardoning love.

But I desire more particularly just now to call attention to the importance of religious work in the homes of the people, and especially among the masses unreached by the Church.

The rich and the poor are alike in need of the Gospel of Christ. Christianity is a great human leveller, and recognizes no social distinctions; and our efforts should not be limited to any one class. I do not believe in the modern gospel of "a loaf of bread in one hand and a tract in the other."

Bread and tracts should be given when needed, but they will not meet the

wants of the perishing multitudes around us. There are but very few in any community who need bread, and many of those if they could be reached by the gospel, would give up idle and expensive habits and provide bread for themselves; but the great mass of the people are in need of the gospel—are perishing for the lack of the Bread of Life.

A religious paper and an invitation to church were handed to a man loafing about a drinking-saloon, one day by a Christian visitor.

“I will take these,” he said, “but I would rather you would give me some green-backs.”

“Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give unto you,” answered the lady.

“But these will not *buy bread, or pay my rent.*”



“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

“That sounds very well, but it will not help me, I fear.”

“According to your faith, be it unto you. Now go thy way, and think on these things.”

Three or four months afterwards, a gentleman arose in the prayer-meeting to testify to the power of Divine grace, and he related this incident as the turning point in his life.

“And when I sought and found salvation,” he said, “I gave up my evil companions and expensive habits and applied myself to business, and *now I can pay my own rent, and have bread enough and to spare.*”

The lady was present to hear the testimony and receive the grateful thanks

of the stranger, and to wish him God speed on the heavenly journey.

Christianity should be put upon its own merits; the poor should never be tempted, or bribed with bread and clothing to a hypocritical profession of friendliness to religion that they do not feel. Such a course does them a positive damage, for the help we give is only temporary, and spiritually they are made worse instead of better. The Church can do little for any one if she cannot reach the heart and change the life.

The secret of the great success of the missions in England, known as "The Missing Link," lies, I believe, in the fact that the people are met on their level, and Christianity put on its own merits.

But there are a great many women in the Church *who would rather make a garment than make a prayer, and would*

*rather give a loaf of bread than to speak of Jesus the Saviour of sinners.*

They are willing to work for the poor, and give money to send the Gospel to heathen lands, but they are not willing to give the Bread of Life to the heathen perishing at their own doors.

But if we would be successful workers, *we must go into the homes of the people—meet them on their own level—talk with them on the subject of religion, as we would talk on other subjects—gain their confidence—show them Jesus in our words and lives, and make them feel that we have a heart experience of priceless worth, to which they may attain.*

And when we have satisfied them that our interest is *real*, and that “our love is without dissimulation,” we will be in a position to lead them to Christ.

*But we must go to all.* There is no

greater inconsistency in the Church, than the general practice of passing by *Romanists, Infidels* and *false religionists*.

We send our missionaries to heathen lands, where the chief authorities are opposed to the spread of Christianity; to a people who speak in unknown tongues, and are separated from us by casts and prejudices, and are hedged in by the accumulated superstitions of ages, and are under the control of an ignorant and corrupt priesthood, who wield almost unlimited power, and expect that success will follow their efforts.

But we turn away hopelessly from the people near our own doors, who speak our language, and can read our books, and are less under the control of priests and false teachers, and leave them to live and die in their errors and sins. There could be no greater inconsistency.

Patient, loving, persevering efforts among the classes named above would yield more glorious results, than are being achieved by the same slow methods in foreign lands.

For plans of work, see p. 55.

We must have the spirit of the Master to do the Master's work. We cannot lead others nearer to Jesus than we go ourselves. Our power will be in proportion to our knowledge of "the deep things of God." For we cannot testify to the things of which we are ignorant, and if we would witness a good confession, we must have a present, living, personal experience. And the best argument that ever has been, or can be made, in favor of Christianity, *is a personal testimony of its truths. We know on whom we have believed.* And a clear consciousness of this, will give us holy

boldness to speak to any one, for "the righteous are bold as a lion."

The world is to be redeemed from sin, and it is our privilege, as co-laborers with the Lord Jesus, to take part in the glorious work.

And when the workers of all lands shall shout home the harvest of the world, if we have wrought faithfully, we too may join the glad acclaim and hear the welcome applaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

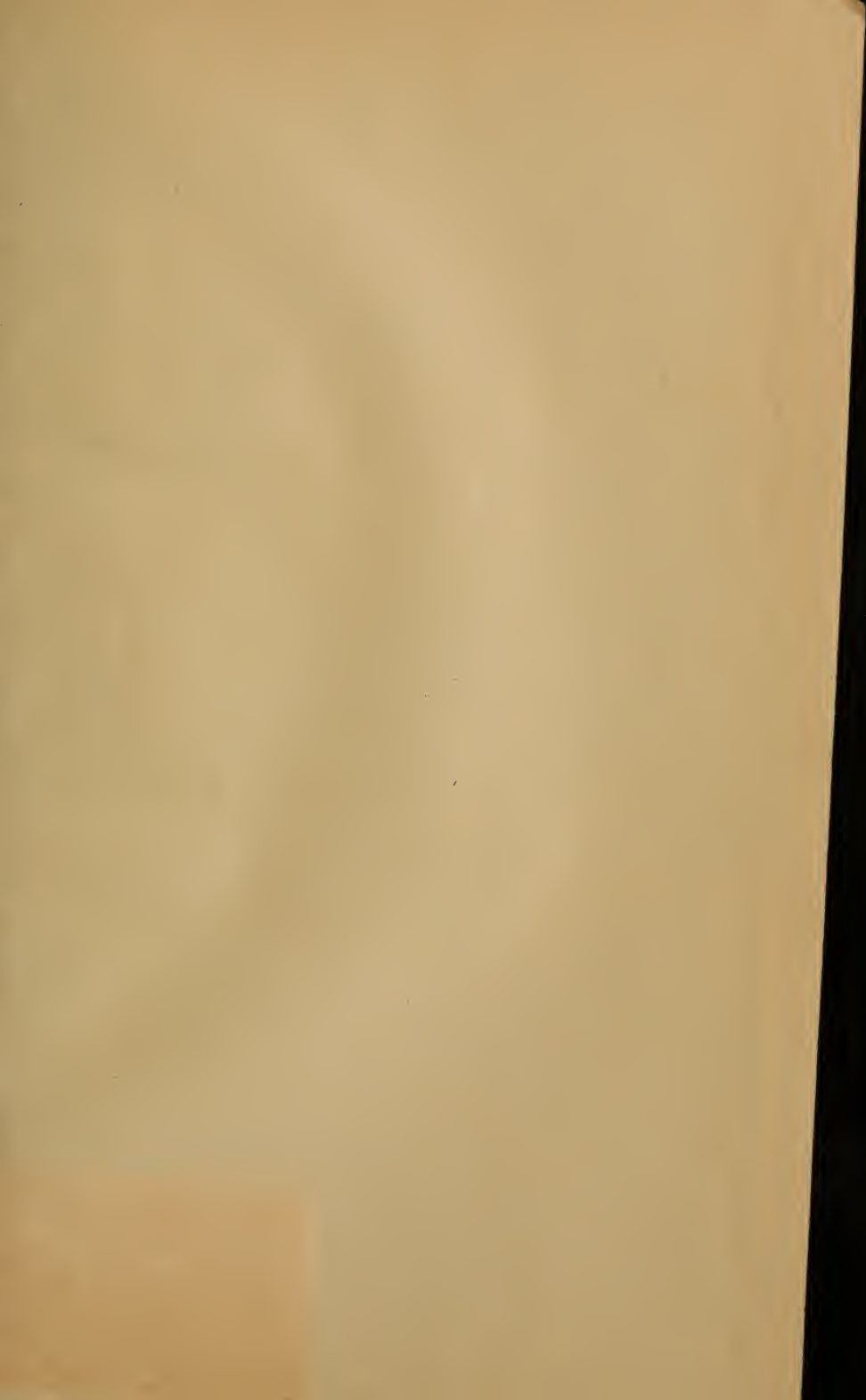
AMEN.

THE END.









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Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: Oct. 2005

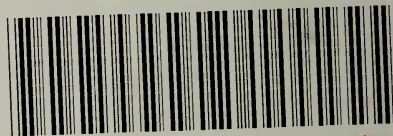
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