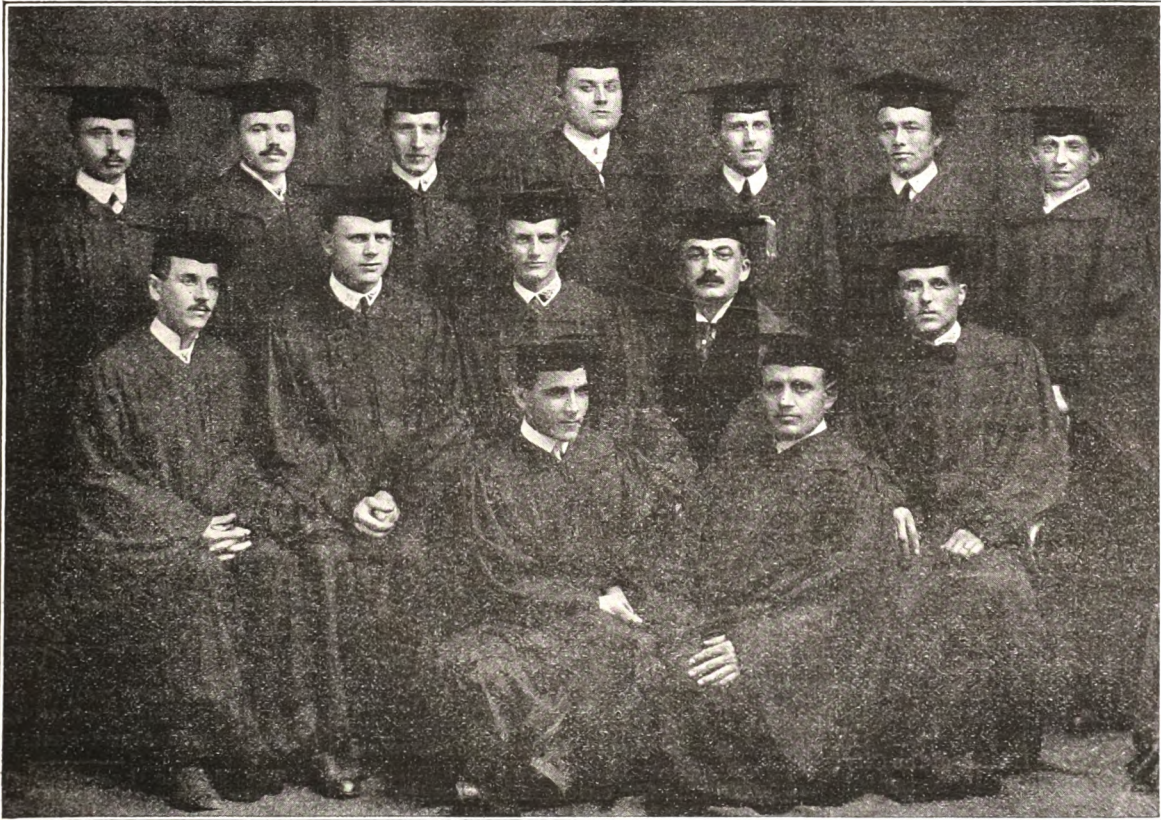


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THE SUPREME OBJECT IN LIFE.

Christian people should realize that the main purpose of their lives is the leading of the world to salvation in Jesus Christ. Nothing else can compare with this in importance. It is the one thing that towers above all other interests and considerations, as the mountains rise above the valleys and plains about them. One may fail in attaining wealth and rank and office and be none the worse in the eternal world. One may not have exuberant physical health or great intellectual culture and still be successful in many real ways, but he who fails of spiritual life and who has not been the means for the salvation of others has made temporal and eternal shipwreck.

We would call special attention to the striking and impressive diagrams found in our issue of August 18th, on page 23, illustrating the importance of early piety from two very significant standpoints. These diagrams might well form the basis for many an earnest talk to people, young and old. They might well be employed as illustrations of the truth that youth is the time to seek the Lord. They might, either or both of them, be reproduced on the blackboard in many a church, and one of them could be used as an actual object lesson, as it, doubtless, will be by many.

The first sets forth the fact that the majority of conversions occur at sixteen years of age or younger. As one passes that age the human probability of conversion lessens. The figures of this particular illustration are based upon the actual experiences of two hundred and seventy-two men. They might be based upon those of thousands, or millions, and probably would not be essentially changed. Mr. Spurgeon, the great soul-winner, said that the majority of those whom he had seen converted were saved before they were sixteen years of age, and said, as based on what he had seen and known, that the world must be saved before sixteen years of age or remain for the most part unsaved. This being the serious fact, it is impressed upon us that we must labor for the salvation of the children. It will not do to relax our energies. It will not do to neglect what is so tremendously essential.

The second view is one that must not be overlooked. Why are we saved? It is not simply that we may be selfishly saved and that we may slip into heaven without doing anything for God or for others. We are saved to serve. We are expected to be the Lord's servants and to do his will. We are expected to do what we can do in winning other souls for Jesus Christ. The earlier we commence the more time we have left in life for this service. If converted in early life one has time for prep-

aration for usefulness, and has more years for service. The full-sized candle is the one that has longest to burn. The life consecrated to God in early childhood has the whole life before it to be used in his service. The life that has burned to its socket in the service of sin has but little time that could be still devoted to God. May the Lord bless these illustrations to many, impressing on their minds the importance and the beauty of early yielding themselves to the grace of Jesus Christ.

CHURCHES AND MANSES.

Increasing emphasis has been laid, in recent years, upon the importance of the manse as a part of the equipment for each church. Wherever a pastor is located it has been urged that a manse be secured as a home for him and his family. The reasons for this are obvious and manifold, and they occur readily to all who consider the matter, and especially to the pastor himself, when he takes a new charge and seeks a place of abode within its bounds.

The pastor and his family must not only have a home in which they will be safely sheltered, but they need to be accessible to the church and in a place where they may readily be found. Many persons seek the minister in an emergency, and it is a great advantage to all the interests concerned that he be in a home to which people may readily come, and to which strangers may be easily directed. In most cases pastors prefer to be close to the church building so that they may be easily found by those who may be seeking them, and in order that they may pass from the home to the church with little loss of time.

For the second time the fact is indicated this year in the Minutes of the General Assembly whether the churches are provided with manses, and it appears that, for the 9,996 churches, there are 4,107 manses. This is a larger number than many anticipated would be reported. Of course many of the churches are small and are grouped with others so that several are taken to form one pastorate. In such cases one manse would answer for a group of churches. Some churches are still young, and some are vacant, and some are poorly provided with church buildings, so that they could hardly be expected to be possessed of manses.

The plan is a good one for every pastorate, where a minister is expected to make his home, to be in possession of a suitable manse. Some of these may have the old Scotch "glebe," or ground for garden, pasture, orchard or field. Some of them may be partially furnished. The manse is an element in the equipment of a church which has much to do with the worldly maintenance of a pastor and his comfort

SELECT READINGS

Home where the weary rest,
Home where the good are blest,
Home of the soul;
Glorious the race when run,
Glorious the prize when won,
Glorious the goal!

—Norman M'Leod.

Have no purpose for a day that you would not have for all the days to come.

The life that has no clouds has no showers of special blessing. Clouds and showers go together.

It is not wealth that gives the true zest to life, but reflection, appreciation, taste, culture.—Samuel Smiles.

It is no wonder that religion makes for business success. It creates in man the very elements that make success possible.

To live a martyr's life for the sake of a good cause is a much greater strain on the energies of the soul than to die a martyr's death.

There is nothing so great that I fear to do for my friend; nor nothing so small that I will disdain to do for him.—Sir Philip Sidney.

An errand of help to some one else is a path toward God. "The law of kindness" is spoken of in the Bible, and is part of the divine law.

Error shrinks from agitation. It skulks into the corners, and asks to be let alone. Like the moth, it frets away in silence, and only wishes not to be disturbed.

Colonel Goethals says: "I had quite a fight against alcoholism among the employes in the Canal Zone, but I finally stamped it out by firing every man reported for drinking."

Charity is greater than justice—it is the temple of which justice is the foundation. But you can not have the top without the bottom; you can not build upon charity. You must build upon justice, for this main reason that you have not at first charity to build with. It is the last reward of good work. Do justice to your brother, and you will come to love him.—Ruskin.

In Christ there is no East or West,
In him no South nor North,
But one great fellowship of love,
Throughout the whole wide earth.
In him shall true hearts everywhere
Their high communion find;
His service is the golden cord,
Close binding all mankind.

SO WHY FRET?

Are the trains too slow for you? Caesar, with all of the court, never exceeded the speed limit.

Are your wages too small? In Europe people are content with making a living.

Are the lights too dim? David wrote his psalms by the light of a smoky torch.

Are you ugly? Cleopatra, though homely, bewitched two emperors.

Are you cold? The soldiers of Valley Forge walked barefoot on the ice and snow.

Are you hungry? Children in India are starving for want of a crust of bread.

Are you tired? Why fret about it? Jacob was tired when he dreamed of the angels of heaven.

Are you sick? Suppose you had lived two thousand years ago, when sickness was almost always fatal.

Are you poor? The Savior of men was not wealthy.

Cheer up! Praise God that you live in the midst of his blessings.

Why fret?—The American Magazine.

THE CHART AND THE COURSE.

Henry Ward Beecher was crossing the Atlantic, and had an interesting talk with the mate of the vessel, who showed him the charts, and explained what each detail signified. Presently, near the Newfoundland banks, they ran into a dense fog, and it was feared that they had drifted out of their course. It was impossible to rest, and Beecher again sought the mate in the chartroom. He was looking at the same charts, but with such a difference. He was looking now with the eyes of a man who had but one chance, and when he had a word for Beecher it was an intense expressive word, "We've got the course!"

It is all very well to examine the Bible in a detached, critical and interested spirit when all is going smoothly, but when one of the crises of life is upon us, then we search it eagerly, intensely, as the mate searches the chart.

THE WRITER OF A SONG.

Would you achieve immortality? Write a song. When will the name of Samuel F. Smith be forgotten? When this nation has crumbled to dust and freedom has ceased from the face of the earth. When will Bernard of Clairvaux and Charles Wesley and Toplady be forgotten? When Christians have ceased to sing because they no longer exist. Across the generations and ages they live because they have put in the lips of men the words that already were swelling in their hearts. They have joined the choir invisible whose refrains echo in the deepest experience of the spirit of man.

And now, after eighty years of slumber in a rural cemetery, the body of the writer of the "Marseillaise" is brought to Paris and (can you believe it?) is to be laid beside Napoleon. What a tribute to the writer of a song!

Rouget de Lisle wrote Europe's anthem of freedom. It is a wild cry to men, to patriotism, to freedom. He put the souls of freemen, or men who would know freedom, into the hot flame the "Marseillaise."

It has the same sound of bugles that is in the "Star Spangled Banner." It is the intoxicating toxin of glory, of patriotism, of freedom.

AN INQUIRY.

The gentleman from Jupiter stopped a hurrying citizen and spoke to him with mild surprise.

"Pardon my curiosity," said the gentleman from Jupiter, "but would you mind telling me why you are hurrying so fast?"

The citizen stopped in amazement.

"Why, to get down to the office, of course," he replied, mopping his brow.

"Ah! And what do you do at the office?"

"Do? Why, I work. Business, you know."

"Yes, but what good does that do you?"

"Good! It buys me food and clothing and—and things."

"Quite so. But why hurry about it?"

"My dear man, if I didn't hurry I wouldn't get to the office on time."

"I see. And do you hurry like this every day?"

"Sure. Every day, every night. Everything is hurry nowadays. You've got to hustle to keep up with the procession."

"And if you fell behind the procession you would die, is that it?"

"Well, perhaps I wouldn't die exactly, but—it wouldn't be good business."

"Ah, yes. And good business, of course, is the main object of life?"

"Certainly. Everybody who's up to date knows that."

"I am beginning to understand. But tell me, after it is all over what have you got to show for it?"

The hurrying citizen looked at the gentleman from Jupiter with a growing suspicion. "Humph!" he said, "I guess you are one of these cranks that go round trying to upset things. You'll have to excuse me, I'm busy."

And the citizen took a flying leap into a passing trolley.—New York Evening Sun.

WHAT "THE FOOL" SAID.

The fool said, "There is no God." But even the fool did not say it in his brains; he said it in his heart. If the fool had looked up at the starry expanse, even he could not have failed to see in the orderly conduct of those innumerable suns the presence of intelligence and infinite power. No, he was a fool who said, "There is no God."

He said it in "his heart," in the seat of his affections, his secret passions, his hidden hate, his meanness. But saying so did not make it so. The judgment day still stood. He was a fool to think that because in his heart he decided there was no All-Seeing Eye, no Nemesis, no God, that therefore there was none.

Some have said, because of disappointments, discouragements, broken hopes, "There is no God." Foolish hearts, to grope on in the dark and danger and desolation, when all the while a Hand is stretched down to them, the omnipotent Hand that suffered itself for very love to be nailed to the shameful cross. Foolish heart, do not say, "There is no God." Put him to the test, rather, and see how present a help is he in time of trouble.

THE UPLIFT OF OPTIMISM.

He who thinks the world is full of good people and kindly blessings is much richer than he who thinks the contrary. Each man's imagination largely peoples the world for himself. Some live in a world peopled with princes of the royal blood; some in a world of paupers and privation. You have your choice.

This is a big, busy world. It cares precious little what you think of it, or what faults or troubles you find in it. It is a choice that concerns yourself more than all others combined, whether you grouch in the gloom, the companion of hateful goblins, or stride in the sunshine, seeing smiles and catching shreds of song.

Men and women in God's image were not made as whining, groveling beings. They were made to stand erect, mentally as well as physically; to labor well and joyously; to take the gifts of Providence, whether they be joy or sorrow, and bear them cheerfully and with courage to add ever something to the world's store of happiness, if it be only a smile.

Look up! See how flooded with sunshine this beautiful world is, when faced with smiling eyes.

If you would win anything, do anything, be anything, don't whine.

MICKY FISHER.

(A Fox Terrier: Died 1911.)

BY REV. S. J. FISHER, D.D.

Dear little dog, the longer life
Of many a man has less of charm,
Of friendship, brightness, and freedom from
The things that harm.

Dear little dog, upon the stair
I hear the patter of thine eager feet,
The leap of joy, the rushing welcome to
The friend you greet.

Kind little dog, in sport, in play
The children's comrade, ready at each
call,
Tireless in romp, so swift to race or catch
The far-flung ball.

Brave little dog, thy slender form
Had courage greater than defeat or blows;
A dauntless spirit, fearless still to brave
The greatest foes.

Sunny thy memory, not one sad
Or hateful deed has left a stain or blot;
Ah, happy life of man without a wrong
To be forgot!

Thou couldst not speak with human
tongue,
But, ah, thy speaking eye was eloquent
In joy or pain thy friends well knew
All that was meant.

And if the sparrow in its fall
Is noted by the heavenly thought,
In its own way thy pleasant, lowly life
God's purpose wrought.