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## A Life of Faith.

BY A. S. WORRELL.

"Without faith it is impossible to please him."

"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God."

"Children of God by faith in Jesus Christ."

"The just shall live by faith."

We enter upon the Christian life by faith, and we live it by faith.

What is faith? It is belief that God's word is true; it is belief that Christ is the Savior of sinners; it is reliance upon Christ to save us individually; and then it is living in vital union with him. Faith is the only receptive power of our spiritual nature, by which we appropriate the promises of God. It is the door-way through which God sends his blessings, or through which he enters himself.

"Faith is the skylight of the soul," through which light from heaven enters, dispelling the darkness of the soul. Faith supplies to hope future good which the former expects some day to realize. There is great danger of permitting hope to retain far too long some of the treasures committed to her future good, which ought to be reduced to present reality. In this case faith becomes indolent, while hope is greatly exhausted by carrying burdens of which faith should relieve her.

The Christian is to live by faith, or "out of grace," as the Greek would express it. Some men live out of their labor; but "the just shall live out of his faith," that is, faith is that power of the soul by which it appropriates those outward elements that are essential to spiritual growth. The soul needs food as truly as does the body, and faith is the hand that must supply the wants of the soul. The supply is unlimited, and we are welcome to all that our faith can appropriate; but we can get no more than our faith takes in.

In developing the spiritual life, faith has a great deal to do, and some of her offices I will now proceed to mention.

1. The current sins of our lives—be they many or few—must be removed from the conscience by faith. You know you have sinned. You should confess it at once, and believe that God pardons it when you confess it. In its action in this case faith is at liberty to use the text, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. Confessing your sin with penitence, and asking forgiveness in Christ's name, you have the right to believe that God does that instant pardon you. Believe in the absence of all feeling save that of penitence, and soon a sense of pardon will settle down, as a blessed calm, in your soul. Prompt confession and prompt faith would prevent sin from crystallizing on the conscience, and keep off many a gloomy day.

2. Faith must appropriate the promises that are designed to be fulfilled in the present life, if we would be what our heavenly Father wishes us to be. A man, owning a section of land, might have a cubic mile of solid gold there; but what value will it be to him, unless he digs down and appropriates it? So with the promises. They may be very "great and precious," but they are valuable to us, only as we appropriate them; possess them, verify them in our experience, realize them.

One of the great central promises that ought to be realized by every child of God, is "the gift of the Holy Spirit," prophesied of by Joel 2:28, 29; by John the Baptist, Matt. 3:11; promised by Christ, John 14:16, 26, also, 15:26, and 16:13; fulfilled for the first time, Acts 2:4; again, Acts 8:15-17; next, Acts 10:44, 45; and declared to be a promise to all true believers, Acts 2:38, 39. The failure to appropriate this promise and to live in the daily realization of it, explains the prostrate condition of the church of the living God, the want of spiritual development, the worldly-mindedness of Christians, the lack of true consecration of themselves and their property to Christ, the feeble missionary spirit characteristic of the professed followers of Jesus—in fine, the failure to utilize this great promise accounts for the wonderful difference between what Christians are and what they ought to be. If any one would materially lessen this frightful difference, a difference that compasses a vast amount of sin and turpitude, he should begin to work on this promise. The road to real progress in Christian life begins here. If faith can take this step, there are grand possibilities beyond. "Fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," succeeds the fulfillment of this promise in the believer. Besides, his "teach-

ing" and "guiding" and "comforting" can never be fully realized until he is fully admitted into the heart. First, determine, from the study of God's Word, whether this wonderful promise is yours; for, so long as there is any uncertainty on this point, you can never exercise faith to receive it. Faith must always have a solid footing in true reason. Reason avers that, if the omnipotent, omniscient, and infinitely holy God has promised anything on certain conditions, it is right and reasonable to believe this promise true; and that, if the conditions have been complied with in any particular case, the promise is secure to that individual. It thus appears that reason is faith's adjunct.

After you have decided that the promise is indeed yours, and you have made reason an ally of faith, long-continued meditation and prayer for the will of God to be done in you will be sure to awaken an intense desire for the bestowment of the promise. This would very likely be followed by a formal transfer (mental of course) of yourself to God. This done, the faith of appropriation must seize the promise, and hold it in the face of all clamoring to the contrary. Faith has to take this last step alone; but when she takes it, and remains steady, the promise which she claims and holds will, in due time, be revealed to consciousness as a thing bestowed and possessed by the individual exercising the faith. First, he holds it by faith; afterwards, as a matter of knowledge, consciousness now testifies that he has it.

When faith has utilized this great promise she, in fact, opens the door of the heart, and "lets the Savior in." Walking in the Spirit, he will fulfill the lusts of the flesh, (Gal. 5:16.) He is now, for the first time, fully prepared to "grow up into Christ in all things," and to "glorify God in his body and spirit." Faith has much to do for most of us yet.

## An Inside View of the Stage.

Whenever the pulpit or the religious press ventures to speak a plain word on the moral influence of the stage, the cry is at once raised that the views expressed are prejudiced, ignorant and prejudicial. The ignorant and prejudiced may be. Doubtless, ministers who denounce the stage have not, in most cases, sat night after night before the footlights to qualify themselves for discussing the subject. But it is not necessary to take a dose of strychnine in order to form an intelligent and well-defined opinion that strychnine is a deadly poison. One may be pretty sure that water will drown without actually making proof of the fact on his own body. And as the man who tested the qualities of strychnine or water on himself would not be able to report to the world the results, the chances are that the man who subjected himself to a heroic dose of theatre-attendance would have his moral sense so blunted that his report would be valueless. A certain kind of ignorance is therefore a qualification rather than a disqualification for discussing such a subject. The same may be said of prejudice. A prejudice against whatever is bad is of decided value to a moral teacher.

But whatever may be said of the ignorance and prejudice of clergymen nobody will suspect members of the theatrical profession of either ignorance of the stage or prejudice against it. If actors and managers do not understand every detail about the theatre, who does? And we certainly cannot suspect an actor of prejudice against the calling that gives him daily bread, or a manager of prejudice against a business in which he often finds large profits. If we find actors and managers denouncing the stage and large profits connected with it, we may feel tolerably certain that what they say is well founded.

A series of remarkable communications on this subject has appeared during the past few weeks in the *New York Herald*. It was opened by an "interview" with one of the most experienced managers in the city, whose name has been connected with some of the most respectable people in the profession, and whose theatres have been exceptionally well managed. He asserted that the stage is in a very bad way; that it is degenerating rapidly both in merit and in morals; that the public is not amused with good acting as of yore, but with shows of greater or less indecency; that good acting is in consequence dying out, and the stage is becoming a mere substitute for the brothel. This view of the case has, of course, been combated by others of equal experience in the profession; it has also had most ample confirmation from both actors and managers. There has been great plainness of speech in the discussion. One of the most finished actors in

the country, if the testimony of critics is of any value, deliberately approves every charge made by the manager, and actresses have frankly confessed the great difficulty of living a pure life on the stage.

In short, if we are to judge the stage by the testimony of those who know, we must pronounce it corrupt and corrupting. No pulpit has ever used stronger language than has been used by the profession itself in describing the evils of the theatre. There can be no impeachment of the testimony. It comes from those whose knowledge is perfect, and whose interest it certainly is not to paint the facts blacker than they are. Nor can the verdict be altered by the fact that there are some actors who lead exemplary lives, some plays that are innocent and even elevating, some theatres that are measurably free from reproach. The stage as an institution is to be considered in its total influence, not in its exceptional excellences. Who shall be found to defend it when those who should be its advocates, if advocates it deserves, turn against it and denounce it as immoral?—*Examiner*.

## "Weighed."

Yes, that is just it; weighed. The eye is easily deceived. When you sell by the eye or by measure, there is a great chance for fraud. You buy kindling of a plausible dealer who comes to your door just at night; "he must get rid of his load," and he will let you have the whole at so much a box; it seems a bargain; he puts it in; you observe the number of boxes as he carries them in, apparently heaping you pay him; the next morning you look at your purchase; how it has shrunk! The kindling was ingeniously piled in such a way that half a box filled a box. If it had been weighed, now!

Here is a gold dollar; it looks well enough; you would not hesitate to take it; but stop a moment; try it on the scales; ah, it is short.

You buy and pay for a ton of coal; but it is just a matter of chance whether it will be 2,000 lbs. or not. You have it weighed on the scales (not on the seller's scales either, unless he is an extraordinary man), and you must have a certificate.

Here is a bushel of wheat; it looks well; the measure is good; the grains seem full and plump; but, before buying it, just weigh it; why? what is the matter? it ought to weigh 70 pounds; it only weighs 55; take up a grain; squeeze it between your finger and thumb; see how it gives and collapses; a weevil has eaten out the heart of it.

And so more and more the tendency is to buy everything by the pound.

We and our acts will be weighed, not counted nor measured. Our acts may look well. This man goes regularly to meeting, and pays his pew; the action shows well; but weigh it; there is nothing in it; it is the force of habit; it is respectability; his mind is not in the worship of God. Here is a generous or at least a large gift to benevolence; it looks well in the newspapers and in the annual reports. But how does it weigh? It is inflated with vanity, with love of applause?

Here is a man decorous in all his demeanor, pleasant in his salutations; he poses as an eminent Christian; but how does he weigh when he is placed in the balances? How much of sincere self-denial has he? How much has he given up for the cause of God or of humanity?

The wealthy citizens, the millionaires, the solid men who stood about the chest, and who dropped, with a certain large and opulent air, their gifts into the treasury, putting in, one a shawl, one a talent, thought that their acts sized up pretty; and so did the crowd about them; the affluent givers were just getting ready their trumpets and their wind to give a concert on the corners of the streets. Just then, there came a woman, a widow, in shabby weeds, who dropped into the chest her little all, all that she had gained by a hard day's work, two little mites; how tiny they looked as she held them on her toil-worn palm before she cast them in!

How small they seemed! But the Master weighed them; then he weighed the big gifts, the gold and silver; and her two mites out weighed them all.

And we ourselves will be weighed. Professions, human estimation will not avail. We, ourselves, the very man, stripped of all disguise and covering, will be weighed in the unerring balances.

The minister will be weighed; his ordination papers will be thrown out of the scale, along with his degrees and titles.

Alas, how many will be found wanting!—*National Baptist*.

## Discontent and its Cure.

What is the worst calamity which could befall any human being? How many and how varied would the answers be, which any hundred persons would give to this question. One good man's answer was this: "The very worst calamity, I should say, which could befall any human being, would be to have his own way from his cradle to his grave; to have everything he liked for the asking, or even for the buying; never to deny himself, and never to want." With many people this condition would be the very ideal of all possible expectation and good. Dissatisfaction with what they have, and a restless craving for what they have not, is at present a prominent feature in all classes of society. Whatever we regard the restless pursuit for novel excitements and pleasures, or the ever-new schemes for getting money easily, or the dreams of political enthusiasts; they all point to the same inner disorder of restless discontent. The social life of all European peoples is feverish with expectation of good, not so much from inner culture, as from external circumstance.

With many, the dream is of an ill-defined equality, which shall obliterate all social and other distinctions, and make all classes one. The picture of endless variety and diversity, in the grasses, flowers, trees, mountains, and rivers, teach such dreamers no lesson. The natural wealth of countries is most unevenly distributed. Beauty of face and form is most variable, and so are health and strength. Intellectual faculties are not less capricious. Some have keen perceptions, so an ear for sweet sounds; some great energy and enthusiasm; some love of order and grasp of details; some are lethargic, dull, and wasteful. Theorize and dream as we will, no such equality is to be found in any department of life; and no external or artificial arrangement could ever make a discontented mind contented, or an idle man energetic.

All men cannot be masters. "Servant" does mean one who is to serve one who is to rule, and be discontented if he cannot. One man's opinion never can be as good as some other man's. Quality and quantity are not the same factors. Weighing and counting are not the same processes. A child or youth never can be absolved from obedience to parents. Young Invidiousness may be rude to Old Authority, but it never can have in youth the experience of age. Women and men must remain different factors in the social order, and they must discharge different duties. The tendency of some is to seek to cancel all distinctions; to degrade service, obedience, and contentment. Many want to lead, few to follow. Hence the discontent of our age.

But if this equality may not be, can men ever be satisfied? Nay, could they be if it did exist? If society were all of one pattern, one type, one color, how monotonous would existence become! There would be little or no need of kindly offices for each other, little to bind society into a unity, springing from the fact that each needs to study and consider the other; no capacity to rejoice in excellences and powers greater than your own; no ideal possible or allowed; no differences calling for patience and self-denial; no want appealing to generosity; no weakness to train gentleness. The dream of equality in such respects, if it could be realized, would barter some of our most precious treasures for very questionable gains. To be satisfied with what we have, and to be happy where we are, is the sure road to secure more, and to rise higher; while to be discontented is an equally sure way to lose what we already possess, and to sink deeper than we are at present.

It would be well in life if discontented persons would sometimes consider the advantages rather than the disadvantages of the position they occupy. The law of compensation is everywhere. The absence of lofty things may give security. The want of capacity may exempt from many anxieties. The lowliest and commonest things are needed by the lordliest. The sunlight needs the purple hills and the happy flowers to display its glory. The seashore needs the coral builder. The farmer needs the stores and worms to ventilate his field. The Elder Cato said that "fools had their uses, for wise men learned from them." Failure has been a blessing to multitudes. "I never found my welfare until I lost it," said a good man. It is through the failure of the students that you get the secretion of the honey; and so many of life's failures have produced the honey of love

and sympathy and kindness. It is said to have to say that not a few faces one meets with bear deep traces of discontent and restlessness. Perhaps nothing is more remarkable in the Royal Hospital for incurables, than the sweetness and thankful content with which they look on the faces of their suffering inmates. Harsh, stern, sour faces are not seen here. The law of compensation is manifest. Can it be the fact that so much suffering and so deep a sense of trust, begotten of consciousness, are needed in life to dispense self, to sweeten our natures, and to make us more thankful for any we have, than discontented because of "littles," we have not?

Surely we may find a spring of comfort in our very disadvantages. The dullness of Nicodemus has always seemed to me to have given the world a large blessing. Your sharp, confident man would never have asked questions in the way Nicodemus did. And perhaps that reply, "God so loved the world," had never been given to a man confident of his own cleverness. Our very troubles and struggles and doubts may yet be a comfort and help to some one who otherwise may never have helped. Even life's wrecks, if properly illuminated, may yet become beacons to future mariners. The great lesson of life is to know how to be happy, and how to be satisfied. Laborer, restless or indolent whining is life's curse, to eat and not be satisfied. The blessing of life is to hunger and eat the bread of truth and righteousness; not to be without enterprise, not to glorify in deadness, or stagnation; not to labor gladly for the best, thankful for whatever fortune brings. Constant, glad activity, with inner rest, is the true ideal; finding life's best not in money, or luxury, but in watching the change of seasons, in cloud pictures, in the growth of bud and blossom, the sweet faces and hopes of children; finding interest in helping others who are more lowly and suffering, taking a pleasure in serving with fidelity, thinking, loving, hoping, praying, working; these have power

so finding rest. It is only such lowly ones who can truly sing the anthem, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

God wishes all his children to be happy, all to prosper; there is no inherent virtue in poverty or failure. Religion and worldly failure have no necessary connection with each other; we should hold every gain as a talent for the glory of God and the service of man. It is not wrong to get more than others; it is our duty to fully employ all our faculties, powers, opportunities. Only whatever we get, whatever superiority to others we may obtain, must be used, not to despise them, not to injure them, or grind them down, nor for any other purpose than to be used as a sacred trust, lent to us as stewards to help and bless men, and so to lift them up, as that God may be honored in thus serving men. Few may thus be leaders, but these few are responsible for the welfare of the many. Whether, therefore, we have leisure or a loving nature, riches or intellect, position or natural brightness, whatever our gifts, they are not ours; they are lent us by God for the service of all whom we can influence, brighten, and bless.

The deep great want of life is heart: "a heart for a thing," a purpose fixed, and then death or victory. To find our joy in determined doing would banish restless discontent. Energy, purpose, resolution, in gladly discharging the daily duties of life, as a service which is well pleasing to God, and as the best we can render, would bring every worker happiness. To work merely for money or what money can give us, with no love for our toil, no interest in others who are over us, must make toil a drudgery, and fill the imagination with restless dreams and deluded fancies. However much money such a worker may earn, he will be discontented. Money is not the only test, or the safest, of a people's happiness. Glad service is more than money. The heart-full is more than the hand-full. The heart can control the hand, but the hand can not control the heart. What I am means more than what I have. Heart-full means expansion, generosity, breadth, culture, love. Hand-full too often means grasping, keeping, meanness, and selfishness.

That is a very common saying, "The more you do for them, and the more they give way to them, the more they want, and the more dissatisfied they become." We all do well to remember that inner desire and demand grow more rapidly than outer supply can ever minister to. The desire feeds on what you give it, and grows, and so far from being satisfied, often only has larger capacity to be

more dissatisfied. This may not prevent a wise concession where proved abuses exist, but it may guard us against the delusion that concession can ever satisfy mere discontent. Nothing we can give can ever satisfy that. The happy man will be the natural heart-singer, who has found delight in that sweet psalm: "Fret not thyself; rest in the Lord, wait patiently for him, and he shall give thee the desire of thine heart."

## Church Connections.

"Nellie," said her husband very soon after the young couple had settled in their new home; "we must make up our minds where we shall have our church home; don't you think so?"

"Yes," answered his wife, "I do not like going into a strange church and being shown to a seat. I do not feel at home at all."

"You would feel less at home if you were not shown to a seat, would you not, my dear?" suggested her husband, quizzically.

"Oh, you know what I mean, you tease," said Nellie. "But I want a seat of my own, and I want to go to church as if it belonged there. Yes, I am quite ready to settle the question as to where we shall go. Indeed, I don't see but that it is settled for us. The first church is nearest, and so far as I have seen, it is a pleasant congregation."

"We could go to the Carter Avenue church; it is not much farther."

"No, not a great deal, but still enough to make a difference to me in stormy weather," said his wife.

"The first church is larger," said Charlie; "perhaps we younger country folks would be overshadowed there."

"Well, Charlie," said his wife, "I do not mind being overshadowed. There will be plenty of work for us if we are ready to do it, and I am not a bit afraid but we shall have all the place we are worthy of—that is, if you are ambitious for place. I am not."

"Nor am I for myself, my dear wife," answered her husband, "but I don't want the talents of the sweet singer of the Young Ladies' Missionary Band, etc., etc., to be buried out of sight."

"In other words," laughed Nellie, "you are ambitious that your wife should shine, so that you may make her honors a reason for taking things easy yourself. Is not that so, sir?"

"Well, Nellie, I never like to see anything wasted, and I am sure your talents ought not to be," was the reply. "But, seriously, is there not more opportunity for our making ourselves useful in a small church than in a large one?"

"No, I don't see that there is," said his wife. "I mean to do what lies in my power wherever we go, and I don't see that one's utmost is more in one place than in another. But then, if you prefer the Carter Avenue church, we will go there."

"No, dear, I have no preference for it over the other. The first church is more convenient. I was questioning a little what might be duty in the matter; but, if we go into the first church to work, it is all right."

So that matter was settled, and the next Sabbath saw them at the close of the morning service in conference with the pew committee of the first church, with the results that the young couple secured their sittings before they left the church. It was not a part of their programme to be known to church sextons as "rounders." At the first opportunity, moreover, they presented their letters of membership, and so became thoroughly identified with the church.

It was some months after, that a neighbor, Mrs. Boulder, called one day on Nellie, and the conversation, after awhile, ran on church relations.

"Aren't you very lonely, Mrs. Benson, in the first church?" asked Mrs. Boulder. "I should think you would be, after coming from your home church in the country. Besides the first church people are stiff and unsocial."

"Oh, I think you are mistaken, Mrs. Boulder," said Nellie. "That has not been our experience at all, and their friendliness has taken away the sense of loneliness that I must confess I had a little of at first. The church is somewhat larger than the one I had grown up in at home, and where I knew everybody. So that it was quite a contrast for awhile."

"Well, I know we tried going there when we first moved here, but no one took any notice of us, and so we went to Union Street. They are not much better there, but we get along. I don't think church people are very friendly anyhow."

"They ought to be, Mrs. Boulder," said the young wife, with a very be-

coming matronly dignity, "and for my part, I have been treated better than I deserve in the first church. My dear old pastor in the church at home said to me just before I left, 'My daughter, he that would have friends, must show himself friendly. When you get into new church relations do not stand on your dignity and expect the others to make all the advances.' My husband and I have tried to act on that advice, and without putting ourselves forward in the least, we have tried to show that we are not meaning to stand on one side, waiting to be coaxed. We don't rush out of church as if we were afraid someone would speak to us, (Nellie little knew she spoke, how hard she was hitting Mrs. Boulder,) we have gone to work in the Sunday-school, and we arrange our engagements so as to have Wednesday evening clear for prayer meeting. We always find some one has a pleasant word for us after the meeting."

"Of all things," exclaimed Mrs. Boulder, rising to take her leave, "sociability in a first church prayer-meeting! I think, my dear, you must be the first person that has discovered it."

Nellie found out after a somewhat longer residence in the place, the reason why Mrs. Boulder had failed to find any friendliness in the first church. "Yes, Mrs. Benson," said the pastor's wife, "we all tried hard to win Mrs. Boulder, but we could do nothing with her. While she attended the church she and her husband would leave the moment that service was over, and no one could get a chance to speak to them. They did not come to the Sunday-school or the prayer-meeting, and when any of us called, she particularly was very cold and stiff, and we had to give her up."

"How pleasant your church people are, my daughter," said Nellie's mother, who was visiting them a few months after the young couple had taken up their abode in the new home. "You seem to have a great many acquaintances, at least, and some of them talk like friends."

None ever so much more pleasant than we have found such delightful church relations."

"You see they did not hold themselves aloof," said the pastor's wife to Nellie's mother.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly*.

## The Good Deeds Live.

It is said of Stephen Girard, that while he was public spirited, and full of charity, he was universally disliked. During the ravages of yellow fever in Philadelphia, at the close of the last century, he was benefactor, physician, and nurse, and was the means of saving the lives of thousands. To those in need and in sorrow, he was always open handed, and yet himself never had a friend. He was regarded through all his life as a public benefactor and a private enemy. But there is one thing for which we ought to be very grateful. Whatever of misfortune and sin there is about men, time removes it from the eyes and hearts of those who knew them best. Mr. Girard's good deeds and large hearted generosity live only now. By these alone he is remembered.

## Winning a Child.

Children love brightness and change. You can always win a child's attention to bright flowers, to bright colors, bright stones, and bright questions; but you never can keep up a monotonous flow of meaningless talk and at the same time keep up the attention of your child listener. This is a point which ought to be borne in mind by all teachers. Make your pupils bright, clear, attractive, enliven your teaching by studied variety of method, and you will have no cause to complain that you cannot get or keep your scholars' attention.

## Not Conformed to the World.

God did not send you into the world to be conformed to the world. If others are faithless and fickle, he meant you to be constant and true; if others sell themselves to low aims, he meant your aim to be high, your resolve clear; if others seek only the things of self, he meant you to seek the will of others and to do battle for the kingdom of God. Perhaps others can afford to be careless, self-indulgent, pleasure-seeking; but not you—no, not you. The loss is yours if you prove faithless to your high calling.

It is a shame for a rich Christian man to be like a Christmas-box that receives all and nothing can be got out till it is broken in pieces; or like unto a drowning man's hand that holds whatsoever it gets.—*Dr. John Hall*.

## A Record of two Sunday-School Classes.

BY JULIA S. FISHER.

When the Union Sunday-school was organized in a certain frontier town, it seemed to me that no class could compare in importance with its class of boys; for, great as the opportunities are with such a class elsewhere, they are immeasurably greater where society still holds its dregs in solution. Nearly every boy in town was enrolled, and likely in the absence of "anything else to go to," to be regularly on hand.

The new school proved itself an "evergreen," undismayed by winter storms. It gave a royal thanksgiving dinner, held a Christmas festival, and several Sunday-school concerts. It had not occurred to me that this class had failed to share in the general prosperity.

When I returned to town a year later, I said to the young friend from whom I had heard of these various pleasures, "How did you like Sunday-school to-day, John?" and was answered in boy fashion:

"Oh! well enough, what I saw of it. We boys came out before it was through, though."

"Why, how was that?" I asked in surprise.

"We didn't have any teacher, and it's no fun to sit there. We did stay it out one other Sunday, but the boys don't mean to go any more."

They held to this intention, and when I visited the school a month later one boy, the sole survivor of this important class, sat by his mother in the Bible class. Meanwhile, the billiard hall and the saloon were less indifferent to their interests, and it is not likely that the habit of Sunday-school attendance will again be formed by any of the older boys.

Would that the host of Sunday-school workers could say: "We know this to be a fancy sketch, for nothing approaching such neglect has come within our experience!"

Another class of boys had reached fluency; consigned them could be depended on to be in their seats. The teacher, was a lady of usual ability and devotion, but something unusual was plainly needed to hold her boys. She did not cherish the common conviction that some pre-eminent person would suddenly appear to work wonders for the class if she only abandoned her post in despair. So she sought for some new attraction which would revive the waning interest.

A small lumber-room at the back of the vestibule suggested possibilities. The janitor was coaxed into finding other quarters for his step-ladder and oilcans, and the room, cleared and rudely seated, was henceforth devoted to the boys. From that hour they felt themselves a real factor in the life of the school. Four years later I saw the room and learned its history.

It is in a little Methodist church in a Western city—an unexpected place to find a model classroom,—but such it has gradually become. A pretty carpet, in harmony with the lounge and easy chair of a discarded pulpit set, a few good pictures of Bible scenes on the wall, a centre table, tastefully draped, and covered with books of reference, make it a little parlor, in which these boys are thoroughly at home. For they, under the teacher's direction, have made it what it is. The carpet, of best Brussels, was their purchase three years ago, when the church was re-carpeted, and their petition for a square of the old carpet was denied. Two years ago the superintendent gave the valuable Bible Atlas, in recognition of the share which this class regularly contributes to the general collection. Last Christmas the handsome lamp was hung, a gift the class appreciates for occasional use, but which the school and church committees who frequently borrow the dainty room, had found needless.

The class now numbers about eighteen boys, between the ages of fifteen and twenty. They regard their teacher with an affectionate respect which may well keep her humble, in view of the influence which the hours spent in that little room will exert over all those young lives.

As a picture of the imagination, this account would possess little value. But as the true record of what one teacher of ordinary ability, determined to make Sunday-school attractive, actually accomplished, it may encourage some dependent one in time to save another class from dying through neglect.

It is a sad thing to be often eating of the tree of knowledge, but never to taste of the tree of life.











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