

Workers and Shirkers.

Address read before the State Sunday school Convention, in San Francisco, Cal., May 25th, by Rev. E. Grant, and published by request of the Convention.

The progress of every enterprise may be marked by the character of its supporters.

To the minds of some every mole hill seems a mountain, while to others every obstacle only arouses a greater determination to press onward to success.

Native character has much to do with the manner of prosecuting any object. While some are born with a spirit to do and dare, to overcome difficulties and to gain strength under trial and opposition, others expect to roll through life on oiled wheels, and to float into heaven "on flowery beds of ease."

It is too true in our life's experience that those who will work may work, while those of weak will and flabby muscle will be excused from exertion on the plea of incapacity. They shrink from a proper exercise of both mental and physical powers which alone can produce a healthy growth and development as Christians. There is in the latter, no "patient continuance in well-doing," no "cultivation of the fruits of the Spirit," no "going on to perfection." As the stream it cannot rise higher than its source, so it is vain to expect of men, higher and nobler actions than the motives from which those actions spring. If these have their fountain in selfishness their outward exhibition will inevitably be of the same nature. We do not "gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles." What a man does is the exponent and outgrowth of what he is; therefore one's first effort should be directed to the formation of his own character. Preparation is in our own hands; opportunity in the hands of God.

The true Christian character should be like a polished, symmetrical stone, prepared for the use of the Great Architect, and in his own time he will fit it into his Eternal Temple.

The subject to which we invite attention at present, is the Christian Women's Missionary Society, of California. This work was inaugurated nearly five years ago, and has been sustained thus far by the energy, perseverance and liberality of its friends. At present it is located in San Francisco, its object being to support the Christian ministry in this great city. It may be asked what interest have women especially in this matter? Of all intelligent creatures, women are most deeply indebted to the Gospel of Jesus the Christ. Wherever it is taught, its immediate effects is to ameliorate and elevate her social condition.

In India there are thousands of women who by their lives of seclusion are shut out from the story of the Cross. They are aimless and hopeless beings, slaves to the will of their husbands and to the usages of their society. Only in Christian countries does woman assume the position which a refined and cultivated nature fits her to adorn. Even those who reject the Savior are unconsciously reaping the benefits of his mild and gentle reign.

The grateful expression of every enlightened heart should be,

"What shall I render to my God
For all his mercies shown?"

In what more appropriate manner can she evince her appreciation of the priceless gift of God's word, than by giving it to others?

The questions of most vital interest to the human family are, Whence do we come? Why do we live? and whither do we tend? The thinking world who reject the Bible are striving constantly, by consulting their familiar spirits, or by diving into the mysteries of nature, to find a solution of these great problems, various and conflicting are their deductions, and the unsatisfied world is still groping in the dark and seeking a new revela-

tion.

The pen of Divine Inspiration alone can unfold these great mysteries. The Book of books, respectable for its antiquity and sublime in its simplicity, reveals our origin and foretells our destiny. It penetrates beyond the limits of time and illuminates even the valley of the shadow of death.

Among its enemies we find those most ignorant of its teachings, those who are unwilling to yield to its requirements and worse than all some who for gain attempt to hold it up to ridicule. How narrow and contemptible are their theories compared with the dignity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—that Gospel which will live and grow after all its traducers have gone to test the truths which they pretend to despise.

How can Christians be induced to feel their responsibility in this matter? How rouse them to realize that the Lord will not hold him guiltless who buries his own poor, little talent, or who fails to improve his ten? This may be done to some extent by the pulpit and the press, but there is a more potent motor in the lives of Christian men and women. This is the heaven which must eventually "leave the whole lump."

Silent example has a powerful influence, and the annals of eternity alone can tell the influence of one pure and well spent life. Let us be not weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. Be not discouraged, oh weary Christian, that your efforts pass unnoticed, or that your sacrifices are not appreciated. Not one unselfish deed or thought, escapes the pen of the Recording Angel. Many a pure impulse is fettered by a galling chain, but the Eye that never sleeps takes cognizance of every ungratified longing for a place among the workers in the Master's vineyard. Remember "they also serve who only stand and wait."

The great failure with Christians is with regard to their liberality for the sake of the Gospel. Too often it is cast that when every earthly desire has been gratified, they will give a pittance of what is left. Where is the sacrifice in thus giving? King David refused to accept as a gift the cattle he wished to offer to God, saying, "Neither will offer as a burnt offering to the Lord my God of that which has cost me nothing." Let us learn a lesson from this, nor dare offer to God the crumbs which fall from our table.

"She hath done what she could," was the highest praise from the lips of the Divine Teacher, yet she of whom it was spoken gave but two mites into the Lord's treasury; but it was all that she had—precious in the sight of the Lord for it came from privation and sacrifice, with many a personal want ungratified. But there are those who could easily give this work an impetus which would carry far on the road to success.

It was woman who feeling her own weakness first asked "Who will roll the stone away from the door of the sepulchre?" The plaintive cry comes down to us thro' the ages and is echoed and re-echoed by the sisters of those first anxious inquirers, "Who will roll us the stone away?" It is at once an acknowledgment of their weakness and a prayer for aid. To many the sepulchre is still closed. The glories of a risen Lord have never dawned upon their darkened vision. To-day we stand in the attitude of supplicants with the same imploring cry upon our lips, "Who will roll the stone away?" The shepherds on Bethlehem's plain rejoiced when the birth of a Savior was announced. A multitude of the heavenly host descended leaving the pearly gates ajar, and a flood of heaven's glory filled the earth and sky, while the heavens resounded with the glad song of "Peace on earth and good will to men."

More glorious is our theme to-day.

It is of a risen and exalted Lord, who has burst the bars of death and robbed the tomb of its terrors. How can we bear the glad tidings to the world? Who with angelic hands "will roll the stone away?" Now, as then, it is a practical question. It is a question of dollars and cents. It represents a real want which cannot be met without means. A real rolling away of the stone was not a greater necessity than is the metaphorical. Angelic hands are still needed. In our utter helplessness and humility, great is our faith. If we are permitted to labor in this field we believe that help will come. Blessed are they who give from their abundance, and more blessed still are they who out of a pure heart give from their necessities.

The word of the Great Eternal has gone forth and the time will surely come when the "knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the seas." God has no need of all the aid our weak but willing hands would give, he accords to us the privilege of working with and for him, as sons and daughters of the Almighty, as brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ and heirs of the same inheritance. "Who shall roll the stone away?"

An Acrostic.

BY MATTHEW.

"Peace on earth," the angels sang,
And, through heaven, the chorus rang,
Comes to earth, Jehovah's Son,
Incarnate God—the promised One.
From radiant worlds beyond the sky,
In haste, the Savior comes to die—
Comes from the loving Father's side.

Condemned to be and crucified!
Hear, sinner, hear that voice divine
Rebuke that stubborn heart of thine!
Infinite love and mercy blend
Supremely in the Sinner's Friend.
To make the sacrifice complete,
Ignoble death, see Jesus meet.
And, while upon the cross he dies,
Night veils the earth and mournful skies.

My Savior, thou didst die for me—
E'en me from sin's dark thrall to free.
Shall I, ashamed of Jesus be,
Since he has done so much for me?
Emerging from the conquered grave,
Now comes he forth with might to save.
"Go, preach my word," is his command,
"Earth's realms, throughout, in every land;
Reap, for the white fields waiting stand."

Why Women Need Faith.

The strength of women lies in their heart. It shows itself in their strong love and instinctive perception of right and wrong. Intellectual courage is rarely one of their virtues. As a rule, they are inclined to be restless and excitable, allowing their judgments and actions to be swayed by quick emotions of all kinds; but above all, it is in their hopefulness and their endurance that they find their chief power. Who is the last person to give up hope in the case of a member of the family who has apparently gone altogether to the bad? What mother or sister, with deep ardent love for such will ever cease to cherish hope or endure suffering on their account? The patience of women is proverbial; and their whole lives are bound up in their affections.

Few people will deny that love, in one form or another, makes up the beauty of life to woman. It enters into all she does. Any work outside her immediate circle is undertaken most often from pure desire to help some one else to know something of the mysterious happiness of love.—MRS. SALISBURY, in *Nineteenth Century*.

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