

The Missionary Leader

"The leaders took the lead in Israel"

Vol. 4

SYDNEY, APRIL, 1917

No. 4

Home Missions Department

Church Missionary Programme

First Week

Blackboard Motto: "A working church is a living church."

OPENING EXERCISES and Reports of Work.

Study: "The Missionary Meeting."

"An Ideal Missionary Meeting."

How to Increase the Interest in Our Missionary Meetings.

LEADER'S NOTE.—The motto should be placed on the blackboard before the meeting. One sentence written upon the board in this way will often make a more lasting impression than much that is spoken.

"How to Increase the Interest in Our Missionary Meetings." This subject is suggested for discussion. From the quotations given from the Spirit of Prophecy, it will be found that active missionary work faithfully reported is the secret of a good missionary meeting. This being so, it is important that every member come to the meeting with some experiences to relate. A missionary meeting without missionaries is sure to prove a mere form, therefore lacking life and interest.

The Missionary Meeting

1. WHAT is a missionary meeting?

A meeting of missionaries. Acts 21:19, 20; 14:27.

2. What should be done there?

Let the missionary meeting be turned to account in teaching the people how to do missionary labour. God expects His church to discipline and fit its members for the work of enlightening the world. An education should be given that would result in furnishing hundreds who would put out to the exchangers valuable talents. By the use of these talents, men would be developed who would be prepared to fill positions of trust and influence, and to maintain pure uncorrupted principles. Thus great good would be accomplished for the Master.—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. VI, page 431, 432.

3. What are the members to be taught to do?

There are ways in which all may do personal service for God. Some can write a letter to a far-off friend, or send a paper

to one who is inquiring for truth. Others can give counsel to those who are in difficulty. Those who know how to treat the sick can help in this line. Others who have the necessary qualifications can give Bible readings or conduct Bible classes.—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. VI, page 433.

4. What should be devised and what will result?

The very simplest modes of work should be devised and set in operation among the churches. If the members will unitedly accept such plans, and perseveringly carry them out, they will reap a rich reward; for their experience will grow brighter, their ability will increase, and through their efforts souls will be saved.—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. VI, page 433.

5. What are the church members to be? 1 Cor. 3:9.

6. How did Christ work?

The work of Christ was largely made up of personal interviews. He had a faithful regard for the one-soul audience. From that one soul the intelligence received was carried to thousands.—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. VI, page 115. John 4:1-30.

7. What was the result of that personal interview? Verse 39.

8. Why are many church members not working for God?

Because the church members have not been properly instructed by those whom God has placed as overseers, many are slothful servants, hiding their talents in the earth, and still complaining of the Lord's dealing with them. They expect to be tended like sick children.—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. VI, pages 434, 435.

9. What must be done to change this condition?

This condition of weakness must not continue. Well-organized work must be done in the church, that its members may understand how to impart the light to others and thus strengthen their own faith and increase their knowledge. As they impart that which they have received from God, they will be confirmed in the faith. A working church is a living church.—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. VI, page 435.

10. How is this organized work to be brought about?

Do not imagine that you can arouse their interest merely by preaching a long sermon at the missionary meeting. Plan

ways whereby a live interest may be kindled. Let all have a part to act. Train the young to do what is appointed them, and from week to week let them bring their reports to the missionary meeting, telling what they have experienced, and through the grace of Christ what success has been theirs. *If such reports were brought in by consecrated workers, the missionary meetings would not be dull and tedious. They would be full of interest, and there would be no lack in attendance.*

In every church the members should be so trained that they will devote time to the winning of souls to Christ. How can it be said of the church, "Ye are the light of the world," unless the members of the church are actually imparting light?

Let those who have charge of the flock of Christ awake to their duty, and set many souls to work.—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. VI, page 436.

The missionary meeting should be a training school for home missionaries.

An Ideal Missionary Meeting

A LETTER from Brother C. E. Weeks, publishing and home missionary secretary of the Asiatic Division, contains the following interesting account of a missionary meeting in the Philippines:

"On Wednesday evening of the first week of my stay in Manila, we had a union missionary meeting for the companies in the city of Manila, and a more enthusiastic meeting I never attended. A moving picture hall was rented for the occasion, as we had no place of our own large enough. Three hundred and seven by actual count were present, and nearly all of them were our own people. A well-arranged programme had been prepared, and it was well carried out. The chairman was one of our native boys, and the secretary was one of the Filipino girls. I endeavoured to tell them briefly what our Home Missionary Department means to this cause, and told them some experiences from various parts of the field.

"While the report of the secretary was given in the Tagalog language, I sat by one of the brethren, who

told me what the sister was saying. She was a wide-awake worker, and gave a good, clear-cut report. It showed that she was secretary in more than name.

"Reports of labour were given in the form of personal testimonies from the members. More ringing reports I never heard. I will just give you the gist of the reports so that you may get some idea of the way the believers in the Philippines are working:

"One brother stated that he had set apart *definite* times each week for missionary work. A sister told how she had been working with tracts and that several were rejoicing in the truth as a result of this work. One of the workers in the printing office had handed out literature, and as a result, one man had been baptized and is now attending the institute preparatory to entering the colporteur work. One of the young brothers stated that he kept two of our leading books to lend to interested people, as he is unable to visit with them all. Three are now in the truth through this reading. Another evangelist told how he had presented the home missionary work to a new company, and they had taken five hundred copies of the missionary paper for their church work. Another sent literature into the hill country, where we had no work started. Now an interest has sprung up, and people are pleading that some one be sent to them. Another young evangelist had gone to a town to open up work, where he found three families keeping the Sabbath through reading.

"I might refer to other reports, but these will suffice to show you that it was a *real missionary meeting*."

Church Missionary Programme

Second Week

Following Directions

Blackboard Motto: "Every true follower of Christ has a work to do."

OPENING EXERCISES.

"Following Directions."

"An Impressive Scene."

Reports of Labour.

Plans for More Aggressive Work.

Following Directions

MR. and Mrs. Straight-Road were an old couple who had lived in the village of Keep-on-in-the-Old-Way

all their lives, honoured and respected. Here their children had been born and had grown up, and they followed in the tracks of their parents, working as they worked and believing as they believed. They said, "What was good enough for father and mother, is good enough for us." So they lived along year after year, happy and contented. The village was quiet and restful, and everything moved on smoothly in the "good old way," until finally it grew into a little city, with a mayor, several aldermen, and a town council.

One day a letter came to the post office, addressed to the mayor, and reading as follows:

December 1, 1916.

"Mr. ———, Mayor
Keep-on-in-the-Old-Way.

"Dear Sir:—

"This is to warn you that a band of robbers has begun operations in the county north of you, and we have reliable information that it intends to work in your vicinity. We are doing all we can to bring the outlaws to justice, but so far they have escaped, and we wish to warn you so you may be on guard against them. We do not know just where they are, but you will do well to be prepared to give them a warm reception if they should come on you suddenly.

"Very truly yours,
"—————"

Now the mayor at this time was a son of the old couple, Mr. and Mrs. Straight-Road, and he could not conceive of any danger's coming to the little city lying so peacefully among the hills. He showed the letter, however, to the aldermen, and a few of the other citizens; but they poo-pooed the idea that such a disaster could happen, and went home to sleep and dream of prosperity ahead.

Now that robber chief said to his band, "We have been successful so far in evading the police and even the State militia. There is a little hamlet down among the hills where I believe we might get a big haul. They are prosperous, and must have a lot of cash stacked up. Let's go down and get it."

So down they went, and the little city woke up with a start one morning to find their stores and banks broken open and their cash gone, and even some of the more wealthy homes invaded and valuables missing.

There was a great cry raised, and it leaked out that the mayor and other officials had been warned of this invasion, but had taken no precautions against it, nor even informed

the men who now were suffering most severely from the raid.

Full of wrath, the bankers and merchants went to the home of the mayor, but he had fled, unable to meet the anger and scorn of his fellow-townsmen.

Now, friends, this is only a parable, for no one in his right senses would ever be guilty of neglect so culpable. But think!

God has sent the world a letter, warning men of a destruction more terrible than that which is pictured as befalling the prosperous city of Keep-on-in-the-Old-Way. A few have read that warning and know what it means, and upon them God is depending to warn the rest of the world. But what are they doing? Are they hiding or neglecting the letter, and leaving the world to go on in ignorance of the impending doom? Are they saying, "The way our fathers did is good enough for us"?

Behold, God has a new way for us to walk, to avoid a danger that did not threaten our fathers. We are living in the "time of the end,"—a time such as the world has never known before. The greatest event of all the ages is about to burst upon us, and we have been given the message concerning its approach, and have been bidden to herald that message "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." If we neglect to give the message, how shall we meet, in the judgment, the lost souls who might have been saved? What excuse can we offer? How can we clear ourselves? Verily there will be no way to clear our garments of the blood of lost souls. What agony that will be! O may none of us who read these lines be in that position!

MARY A. STEWART.

An Impressive Scene

"IN the visions of the night a very impressive scene passed before me. I saw an immense ball of fire fall among some beautiful mansions, causing their instant destruction. I heard some one say, 'We knew that the judgments of God were coming upon the earth, but we did not know that they would come so soon.' Others, with agonized voices, said, 'You knew! Why then did you not

tell us? We did not know.' On every side I heard similar words of reproach spoken."

"Are we to wait until the fulfilment of the prophecies of the end before we say anything concerning them? Of what value will our words be then? Shall we wait until God's judgments fall upon the transgressor before we tell him how to avoid them? Where is our faith in the word of God? Must we see things foretold come to pass before we will believe what He has said? In clear, distinct rays light has come to us, showing that the great day of the Lord is near at hand, 'even at the door.'"

"In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light-bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import,—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention. . . . The world is to be warned, and God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them."—*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. IX, pages 20, 19, 28.

"THEN they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household." 2 Kings 7:9.

Church Missionary Programme

Third Week

The Work of the Church

Blackboard Motto: "We are labourers together with God."

OPENING EXERCISES: Reports of Work. Study: "The Work of the Church."
"Soul-Saving."
"Lost People."

LEADER'S NOTE.—References for the Bible study should be distributed before the meeting among those present. Build up the diagram on the board as the study progresses, asking the question before the verse is read, and afterwards emphasising the answer. When the diagram is complete, it would be well to review what has been

learned regarding each item of the summary, letting each give the answer in his own words. Call for a recital of Bible promises to workers.

The Work of the Church

1. Object. 2 Cor. 5:20.
2. Extent. Acts 1:8; Rev. 14:6.
3. Service universal. Mark 13:34.
4. Reasons for warning all. Acts 15:14; Matt. 24:14.
5. General representation in the kingdom. Rev. 7:9.
6. Urgency of the work. Matt. 24:32-34.
7. Zeal demanded. Eccl. 9:10.
8. Condition of the field. John 4:35.
9. Co-operation in the work. 1 Cor. 3:9.
10. Our part. Eccl. 11:6.
11. God's part. 1 Cor. 3:6.
12. Assurance. 1 Cor. 15:58.
13. An illustration. Isa. 55:10, 11.
14. Promises to the workers.

Soul-Saving

"GOD has given me a message for His people. They must awake, spread their tents, and enlarge their borders. My brethren and sisters, you have been bought with a price, and all that you have and are is to be used to the glory of God and for the good of your fellow-men. Christ died on the cross to save the world from perishing in sin. He asks your co-operation in this work. You are to be His helping hand. With earnest, unwearying effort you are to seek to save the lost. Remember that it was your sins that made the cross necessary. When you accepted Christ as your Saviour, you pledged yourself to unite with Him in bearing the cross. For life and for death you are bound up with Him, a part of the great plan of redemption."

"In all lines of our work there is need of greater earnestness. Time is passing. God's servants are to be 'not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.' People need the truth, and by earnest, faithful effort it is to be communicated to them. Souls are to be sought for, prayed for, laboured for. Earnest appeals are to be made. Fervent prayers are to be offered. Our tame, spiritless petitions are to be changed into petitions of intense earnestness. God's Word declares, 'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.'"—*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. VII, pages 9, 12.

Lost People

"LOST people are everywhere. They are all around us. They are in our homes. We meet them on the

street, without hope, without God. O, there ought to come from God upon us all a great burden for lost people! That is what the church needs to-day,—a burden to save lost men and women from that dead march that is just ahead of us."

G. B. THOMPSON.

Church Missionary Programme

Fourth Week

Blackboard Motto: "Consecration to God means service to man."

OPENING EXERCISES and Reports of Work.

"Qualifications for Missionary Labour."
"A Holy Life."

Qualifications for Missionary Labour

1. FOR what purpose has God chosen or purchased His people? 1 Peter 2:9.

2. How only can we show the praises of Him who called us?

3. In connection with the formation of what kind of character does the apostle Paul enjoin the holding forth of the words of life? Phil. 2:15, 16.

4. Does God accept the efforts of any one to advance His cause who is knowingly transgressing His law? Ps. 50:16, 17.

5. If any one who is blind spiritually should lead another, what would be the result? Luke 6:39.

6. What does the Saviour call a person who attempts to correct faults in others before correcting his own? Verses 41, 42.

7. What will qualify one to labour successfully for others? Verse 42.

8. What does the psalmist say with respect to teaching transgressors and of the result of his efforts? Ps. 51:2, 10, 13.

9. What point in his Christian experience was it necessary for him to reach before feeling this assurance? Verses 11, 12.

10. How does the prophet Isaiah speak of his sins being removed? Isa. 6:5-7.

11. What did he then hear? Verse 8, first part.

12. How did he respond? Verse 8, last part.

13. What is always the first impulse of a renewed heart?

"Just as soon as a person is really converted to the truth, there springs

up in his heart an earnest desire to go and tell some friend or neighbour of the precious light shining forth from the sacred pages. In his unselfish labour to save others, he is a living epistle, known and read of all men. His life shows that he has been converted to Christ, and has become a co-labourer with Him."—*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. V, page 386.

14. How did the Lord answer Isaiah? Verse 9, first part.

15. How is God now calling for persons to carry His message to the people?

16. If those who profess to serve God fail to recognize this call, or, understanding it, are not inclined to respond, what is the cause?

17. What is the first work such members need to do?

A Holy Life

"IT is not only by preaching the truth, not only by distributing literature, that we are to witness for God. Let us remember that a Christlike life is the most powerful argument that can be advanced in favour of Christianity, and that a cheap Christian character works more harm in the world than the character of a worldling. Not all the books written can serve the purpose of a holy life. Men will believe, not what the minister preaches, but what the church lives. Too often the influence of a sermon preached from the pulpit is counteracted by the sermon preached in the lives of those who claim to be advocates of truth."

"The lives of professing Christians who do not live the Christ-life are a mockery to religion. Every one whose name is registered on the church roll is under obligation to represent Christ by revealing the inward adorning of a meek and quiet spirit. They are to be His witnesses, making known the advantages of walking and working as Christ has given them example. The truth for this time is to appear in its power in the lives of those who believe it, and is to be imparted to the world. Believers are to represent in their lives its power to sanctify and ennoble."

"All who would enter the city of God must during their early life set forth Christ in their dealings. It is this that constitutes them the mes-

sengers of Christ, His witnesses."—*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. IX, pages 21-23.

Missionary Volunteer Department

Missionary Volunteer Programme

First Week

Behind the Scenes

OPENING EXERCISES: hymn; prayer; secretary's report; Scripture drill; reports of labour; hymn.

Five-minute Exercise: Questions on "Life Sketches of Ellen G. White," for week ending April 7.

"When Satan Called a Committee Meeting." (See *Record*, March 12.)

Plans for Work.

Hymn.

LEADER'S NOTE.—The reading, "When Satan Called a Committee Meeting," will be found helpful, exposing as it does plans the enemy of souls is pushing. The effectiveness of this reading will depend very largely upon the way it is presented. We suggest that the leader of the society, or a member who is an exceptionally good reader, be chosen, and given ample time in which to make a study of it. It would be well to turn the remaining time into a committee meeting to lay plans for doing more for Christ. Ask every one present what he will do the coming week: some who cannot go out will volunteer to write missionary letters; others can visit hospitals and ships with free literature. Secure the promise of others to sell or lend certain literature. When every member has pledged himself to do something definite for Christ, there will be no shortage of interesting reports. Impress upon the society that unless every member is a working member, he will surely be ensnared by Satan.

Missionary Volunteer Programme

Second Week

God's Word

OPENING EXERCISES: hymn; prayer; secretary's report; Scripture drill; reports of labour; hymn.

"The Books of the Bible."

"Old Testament Writers: Who Were They?"

"Baked Her Bible to Hide It."

"Power of the Bible."

Favourite Verses.

Reading Course Review.

Hymn.

LEADER'S NOTE.—"The Books of the Bible." Explain and demonstrate by writing the words upon the blackboard; this will be an effective way of remembering how many books there are in the Bible. One week beforehand ask the young people to ascertain as many of the writers of the Old Testament as possible, and the position held by each, or the occupation they followed. For instance, Daniel was Prime

Minister of the kingdom of Medo-Persia. In the meeting ask for a show of hands of all who can tell who wrote the first five books, and then call upon one to give the information; and so on. This will require some research, and will be profitable. After the last reading, ask the members for their favourite verses, placing the references on the board, as the texts are quoted or read by those who suggest them.

The Books of the Bible

DO YOU know how many books are in the Bible? You once knew, but have forgotten? Let me tell you one good way to remember so as never to forget. First write down the words "Old Testament." Now how many letters are in the word "Old"?—Three. How many in the word "Testament"?—Nine. Put 3 and 9 together and you have 39, the number of books in the Old Testament.

Next write down the words "New Testament." There are also in "New" and "Testament" 3 and 9 letters. Now multiply 3 and 9 and you have 27, the number of books in the New Testament.

Of course, by adding 39 and 27 you have 66, the number of books in the Bible.

Any boy or girl who will read this over twice will never forget how many books are in the Bible.—*Selected*.

Baked Her Bible to Hide It

ONE of our aged members, descended from one of the Huguenot families, told me how her great-great-grandmother managed to get her treasured Bible out of France in the days of her flight. Even when Protestants were allowed to cross the border, their luggage was searched for Bibles, which were seized and burned. Our sister's worthy ancestor wrapped her Bible in a mass of dough, and baked the dough into a generous-sized loaf of bread. Thus with the "staff of life" concealing the "bread of life" indeed, she made her way out to liberty, and carried her treasure to the new world of Africa.—*Selected*.

Power of the Bible

WHEN Nicholas I became Emperor of Russia, his first task was to put down those who were plotting for his overthrow. Many nobles were found guilty and thrown into prison. Among those suspected and arrested,

however, was an innocent man, who by nature possessed a fiery temper. To be taken from a position of wealth and honour and cast into prison, without cause, infuriated him, and he raved like a wild animal. Day after day, brooding over his ill-treatment, he would stamp shrieking through his cell, and curse the emperor and curse God. Why did God not prevent this injustice? No quiet came to him save when exhausted after his fits of rage.

A visit from a venerable clergyman, on the ninth day of his imprisonment, produced no softening effect. The good man's prayer was heard with sullen contempt. The divine words, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" sounded like mockery to the embittered prisoner. The aged minister went away, leaving a Bible in the cell, which he begged the prisoner to read.

As soon as his visitor was gone, the angry nobleman kicked the Bible into a corner. What to him was the Word of a God who let tyrants abuse him?

But when the terrible loneliness of succeeding days had nearly crazed him, he caught up the volume and opened it, and his first glance fell on the middle of the fiftieth psalm: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee." The text surprised and touched him, but his pride resented the feeling, and he dropped the book.

The next day desperation drove him to the only companion of his solitude, and from that time he read the Bible constantly. Then he began to study it, and to commit whole chapters to memory. The story of the Saviour's life and death totally changed him. He saw himself a fellow-sufferer with the Christ who was unjustly accused and slain.

Revengeful rage left him, and the spirit of a martyr took its place. Like the persecuted Christians shut up in the Roman catacombs, he forgave his enemies. An unworldly joy filled the time he had once spent in harsh thoughts and words. The shadows of wrong and death vanished in the new light that shone upon him from beyond. The company of a Book—the only Book in all the world that could have done it—had given the proud noble another heart.

Madame Dubois, once a beloved missionary among prisons in New

York, from whose writings this story is taken, was in Russia staying with the aunt and sister of the condemned man when they received a letter which was believed to be his last. It was the outpouring of an exalted soul who had risen above fate. He had undergone his trial, and, unable to prove his innocence, had been sentenced to death.

On the day set for his execution, while the ladies of his mansion walked in tears through the crape-hung parlours, suddenly the sight of their doomed kinsman himself at the door astonished them.

It was an unhopèd-for deliverance at the last moment. When the jailor's key unlocked the prisoner's cell, instead of the messenger of death as expected, there stood the Czar of Russia before him. The letter of another man who was plotting against the Czar had been intercepted and read. This placed beyond doubt the innocence of the suspected nobleman. The Czar made what amends he could by bestowing on him a splendid castle and raising him to the rank of a general.

Nearly a hundred years have passed since then, and with them the life of the almost-martyred Russian; but the fruits of his devout faithfulness and kindness among his fellow-men, the hospital he built for the sick and friendless, and the very Bible he was shut up with in his own distress, still bear witness to a consecration that was worth all it cost to obtain it.—*Selected.*

Missionary Volunteer Programme Third Week

"Gather up the Fragments"

Blackboard Motto: "Of no talent God has given will He require a more strict account than of our time."

OPENING EXERCISES: hymn; prayer secretary's report; Scripture drill; reports of labour; hymn.

"What Has Been Accomplished by the Wise Use of Moments."

Scripture Reading: Nehemiah 6: 1-3.

"The Value of Minutes."

"The Talent of Time."

Announcement: See next week's Leader's Note.

Reading Course Review.

LEADER'S NOTE.—Two weeks before this meeting, arrange for three members to prepare short papers on "What Has Been Accomplished by the Wise Use of Moments." Incidents may be related concerning men who have become great through this habit; how missionaries have been developed by it:

or what may have been done by persons of our own acquaintance who gathered up the moments. Another member may prepare a brief paper on "The Talent of Time," based on the chapter in "Christ's Object Lessons," on this subject.

The Value of Minutes

TIME is money; it is character. Usually, fortunes are made, and lost, by small amounts. So it is with the building of character, and the using of time to make character. De Quincey draws a picture of a beautiful woman sailing across a lake. While she was looking into the water in a dreamy manner, a necklace of pearls which she wore had been broken, and the pearls were dropping one by one, one by one, into the water. Thus the valuable necklace was lost.

This is a good illustration of the way in which our minutes, more valuable than pearls, are often lost. It is a sad thing that so many, dreaming away life's golden time, fail to bind up this necklace of moments, and, as a consequence, one by one these pearls of time are lost, as fully, as completely, as were those pearls dropping from the necklace.

I believe that no one will ever achieve success, or will ever be thoroughly useful in life, who does not recognize the worth of sixty seconds. There is a great deal that can be accomplished in sixty seconds. A character may be made or lost in sixty seconds. We are likely to think that one minute is of little consequence, and yet I repeat, that each one of them is freighted with weighty responsibility.

Joseph Cook, one of the greatest preachers of modern times, was a poor boy, and while at school had to work his way. While waiting for his meals, instead of standing around, talking and joking with the boys, he started straight for the dictionary in the corner of the room; and there was more truth than poetry in the saying that he had eaten the dictionary. He looked up synonyms, he looked up the meaning of words, and acquired in this way much of his great ability to use the English language.

We look upon William Gladstone as a genius. We think him a wonderful man; and he was; but to the day of his death he always carried a book in his pocket, that he might read when he had a moment to spare. That is how he became a genius.

There is no genius except that of hard work. If William Gladstone, with all his great powers of mind, recognized the importance of carrying a book in his pocket, that he might employ the spare moments, I wonder if you and I, with our weak powers of mind, ought not to learn a lesson from it. And I will tell you that if we would improve the minutes which come to us, and which we let go carelessly when we have actual work at hand, we would find that our progress in our work would in every sense be doubled.

Did you ever stop to think how much you can accomplish in one hour's time? If you decide to spend one hour a day in reading, notwithstanding this time may be in snatches of five or ten minutes each, how much you can read in a year! You can read twenty pages an hour of ordinary reading. In one week you will read one hundred and forty pages; in one month, five hundred and sixty pages. That is more than one book of usual size, it is even two books. Then it is safe to say that you can read more than a good solid book a month by gleaning an hour a day. As your power to read and to think increases, there is a possibility of increasing this number to fifteen or twenty books a year. Think of it!

PROF. FREDERICK GRIGGS.

Missionary Volunteer Programme Fourth Week

Blackboard Motto: "No prayer, no power; little prayer, little power; much prayer, much power."

Hymn: "Christ in Song, No. 485; Prayer; Minutes; Scripture Drill; Reports; Hymn No. 515. Chorus after last stanza only.

"Causes for Negligence in Prayer."

"What God has done for those who have called upon Him in prayer."

Reading Course Review.
Hymn No. 555.

LEADER'S NOTE.—As we are just entering to-day upon the week of prayer, the subject for our programme seems especially fitting. Impress upon all the importance of gathering personal help from the study. The reading, "Causes for Negligence in Prayer," should be divided amongst several members to present. They will set forth clearly why we do not pray more than we do. "What God has accomplished for those who have called upon Him in prayer." Having asked the members, the week beforehand to bring a list of wonders God has wrought in answer to prayer, call upon one and another to relate these incidents briefly. Suggest some the young people may not

have thought of, using such references as James 5:17 and Joshua 10:12, 13. Emphasise the fact that God is willing (Eph. 3:20) to do as much for us, when sin is put away, as He did for Israel when Achan's sin was put away from the camp before the victory of Ai.

Causes for Negligence in Prayer

NO means of grace is more sadly neglected among Christians generally than prayer. There may be excuses for neglecting one's education and one's business, but there is not one good reason for neglecting prayer. God not only denounces, but also declares that He will punish, those who fail to wait upon Him. "I will also stretch out Mine hand upon . . . those," said He, "that have not sought the Lord, nor inquired for Him." Zeph. 1:4, 6.

One of the great reasons, if not the greatest, for so many misdoings and misfortunes, lack of happiness and strong influence, is negligence in prayer. Said a murderer, just before his execution, "If I had gone to prayer the morning before I committed the sin, I believe my hands would have been restrained from that sin." That is true along a score of other lines. Prayer is a *preventive* of all kinds of sin, as well as a *cure* for all kinds of sin.

There are many causes for neglecting prayer—real and unreal.

Inability to Pray Properly

One excuse for negligence in prayer is *inability to pray properly*. We admit that few of us know how to address God; but where does Scripture demand a certain phraseology, or a certain form, in order to pray? We do not expect a child to use good grammar or logic or rhetoric. Nor does God expect more of His children. Why do so many of us doubt our ability to talk with God yet we feel perfectly free talking with one another?

This excuse reveals the real character of the excuser. It is not inability to pray, but an *unfitness* to pray, that causes negligence in prayer. Prayer is *God's test of character*. Where a heart delights in prayer, there will be ability to pray. Soul-longings will soon find logical words to express themselves, even if not grammatical or rhetorical.

Lack of Time to Pray

A second excuse for neglecting prayer is *lack of time*. Is this not a gilded falsehood? Can we not find

time for the fruitless diversions that so often appeal to our appetite, our vanity, our amusement, and even our idleness? Wherever a heart is found that loves to pray, time will be found *in which to pray*. If we have no time to get *in touch with God*, we have no time to *be like God*, and no time to work for God.

We are living in a busy period, but none should ever be so busy as to neglect communion with God. "Is not the life more than meat?" asks Jesus. Matt. 6:25. Is not the care of our souls, the spiritual development of our characters, of more special importance than the carrying forward of our studies, or daily duties?—Yea; he that lays his studies, his plans, his business, before God, is never the loser, but the gainer. Prayer is a working force as well as a molding force. Jesus said, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33. I would rather bank on Jesus in giving Him part of my time, than risk domestic or business or political affairs without Him.

Daniel was Prime Minister to Darius. All the affairs of the Persian empire were under his supervision. One hundred and twenty provinces demanded his care, especially as he had a council against him. Yet he found time to wait on God *three times a day*.

King Alfred the Great, in spite of the pressure of public affairs, dedicated a *third of his time* to God. Luther's busiest days were bathed in secret prayer. "I cannot get along without *three hours a day* praying," said he, "when most pressed with work." Canning tells us, in the life of William Pitt, that he never allowed the pressure of public or private cares to prevent him from improving seasons of retirement, in which he found virtue's highest incentive and reward.

George Müller, famous for his homes for orphans, used to say "that four hours of work for which one hour of praying prepares, is better than five hours' work with the praying left out; that our service to our Master is more acceptable when saturated with the moisture of God's blessings."

How many there are who, when they come to die, will confess, like the saintly Henry Martyn, that they

have "devoted too much time to work and too little to private communion with God"! Time only for the temporal, means death to the spiritual. That accounts for the prevalent moral and spiritual *anemia*—the bloodlessness and lifelessness of so many Christians to-day.

Lack of Cultivation

Another cause for negligence in prayer is a *lack of cultivation*. Like many other things, the prayer habit does not grow of itself. It must be cultivated. Cultivation is the only method to reach perfection.

Persons of prayer and prayer-power do not become such in a moment. A story is told of a Highland soldier who was caught creeping into camp one night, during the Revolutionary War. He was charged with being a spy, and taken before the commanding general. Being asked why he left camp, the soldier replied, "I left it to be alone with God in the woods to pray." "Then down on your knees," thundered the officer. "Within twenty hours you shall be shot as a spy. You never needed to pray as much as you need to pray now." The soldier dropped to his knees and poured out his heart to God. Tears came into the eyes of the general. Turning to the guard, he said: "Let this soldier go. He's telling the truth. No man would pray like that in public unless he had drilled in private."

Love for prayer, strength in prayer, comes from cultivation of the prayer spirit. One can get so in love with God, that like Enoch he will "walk with God" (Gen. 5: 22), and their conversation will be a delightful dialogue—the two talking with each other—the One lovingly smiling and blessing, the other weeping and petitioning:

"Let me love Thee more and more,
Till this fleeting, fleeting life is o'er;
Till my soul is lost in love
In a brighter, brighter world above."

Abnormal Appetite for Worldly Things

The last real reason for neglecting prayer is an *abnormal appetite for the world and worldly things*. These are wonderfully attractive. Such entrancing scenes! Such exciting pleasures! Such social gaiety! The passion for fame and name, position and influence, was never greater. The unquenchable spirit of commer-

cialism to secure these things is the ruling spirit of a large number.

The world is a beautiful place in which to live. Jesus recognized this fact. He also recognized the evil in it, when He offered that wonderful petition for saints everywhere, "I pray *not* that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil." John 17: 15. He did not advocate the spirit of hermit or monk. To grow strong in character and in the kingdom work, one has to move along lines of the greatest resistance.

Prayer and worldliness cannot abide together. They are like the seesaw of our childhood sports—when one goes up, the other goes down. As the worldly spirit creeps into the heart, the prayer spirit is driven out. Sharp distinctions must be made, not only of common evils, but of *all doubtful ones*. Compromising with evil is not permissible with God.

To crush the world and the worldly spirit will take all the strength we can muster, and this strength is only gained in prayer. Then let us plead with God in the words of Charles Wesley:

"Arm me with jealous care
As in Thy sight to live;
And O, Thy servant, Lord, prepare
A strict account to give.

"Help me to watch and pray,
And on Thyself rely,
Assured, if I my trust betray,
I shall forever die."

Sabbath-School Missionary Exercises

(April 7)

An Interesting Story

At a meeting recently held at Seoul, Korea, there were an old lady and a young man present who told an interesting story. The woman had sold a copy of the Korean paper to an innkeeper, whose inn was visited a day or so later by the young man. He read the paper and became so interested that he asked the keeper if he had any other copies in the inn. Receiving an affirmative reply, he secured them and read with increasing interest. Later, he secured from the publishing house by mail all the literature he could get, and after their study ardently accepted the truth,

never yet having met a living representative of the message.

There naturally followed trouble with his employer, a Japanese, who demanded that he work on Sabbath, and dismissed him for refusal, thinking that this action would overcome his religious convictions. Finding, however, that he had failed, he sent for the young man, and reinstated him with a good salary. A little later this man returned to his father's home with a burden to bring the truth to his people. The result was a church of eighteen members fully versed in important points of truth and ready for baptism, and a church building erected free of debt, before yet having been instructed by one of our workers. The young man is now a field agent in one of the four local divisions in Korea, and is doing fine work.

It is such experiences as this one that make our colporteur work worth while, and bring such satisfaction to the workers, and that should also rejoice the hearts of those in the homeland who are helping by these means to advance the work in these lands.

H. M. BLUNDEN.

(April 14)

Made Kindling of His Gods

ONE of the men who are now attending our meetings regularly was formerly a police captain. During the revolution, he was shot, but not seriously injured. As a result of this, he decided that life was a very uncertain affair, and so he began attending some religious meetings that were conducted in a nearby mission chapel. But he was not convinced of the reality of the gospel, and so continued to worship the idols of his forefathers.

One day, he chanced to pass our chapel door. Brother Hwang was standing at the door, and engaged him in conversation. Following this, the man came regularly to our gospel meetings. He said there was a certainty about the things he now heard, that convinced him of the reality of Christianity. He soon decided to destroy the idols that were in his home, but to this his wife most strenuously objected.

One day, when she had gone out to visit a neighbour, he seized a hatchet, and made kindling wood of all his gods. I now have in my possession

some of the broken fragments of his former idols.

This incident is a striking evidence of the power of God's living gospel message. It meets the needs of the pagan of to-day, and leads him to destroy his idols, just as the message that Paul preached led the Ephesian sorcerers to burn their books of sorcery. He has found something far superior and truly satisfying.

A. C. SELMON, M.D.

Nanchang.

(April 21)

A Tribe of Kings

FIVE years ago, a tract entitled "The Illuminated Pathway" was purchased at a market town in southern Hunan, China, by a Confucianist named Wang—written and translated "King." He took the tract to his mountain home, where he read it carefully; and being impressed with the message it contained, he wrote to our nearest out-station, asking for more literature, and also inviting the evangelist in charge to visit him at his home.

Ten Thousand of Them

The evangelist accepted the invitation; and later it was the privilege of Mrs. Cottrell and myself, while on one of our itinerating trips, to be entertained by Mr. Wang and his family. We were the first foreigners who had ever crossed that mountain range. On arriving, and being introduced to a number of his friends by the name of Wang, we inquired of our host, "How many people are there here by this name?"

"Oh," was the answer, "there are over six hundred in our family, but in the entire Wang clan there are nearly ten thousand."

They Occupied a Mountain

For a number of hundred years this clan has lived, and occupied a considerable tract of land on the top of this mountain range. They build their own houses of brick made by themselves; they make all their furniture of timber that grows upon their own property; their land produces all the grains and vegetables for their sustenance; and they weave their own cloth from hemp grown by themselves. Thus if shut off from the rest of the world, they could practically provide for all their necessities.

Deliverance Brought to Them

But left to themselves, they were destitute of any power or method of deliverance from sin. We held meetings with them, unfolding to their minds the wonderful plan of salvation. We advised them to prepare a school building for the education of their children and youth, and also to erect a chapel for religious services, promising them that the mission would help them by sending a school-teacher, and occasionally an evangelist. The buildings were provided, largely by their own efforts, and a mission school is now conducted.

It has been our privilege, from time to time, to see a number of these people follow their Lord in baptism; and at the time of Brother Wang's last visit to Hankau, he reported that fully two-thirds—or about four hundred—of his large family had forsaken their idols and were groping their way toward the "illuminated pathway." He also said that the good tidings were spreading to other villages and towns in the vicinity of his home, and he earnestly requested that we send them more help.

This is only one of the many calls in central China which are thrust insistently upon us. To a large extent, it rests with the church in the homeland to decide how and when these calls shall be answered.

R. F. COTTRELL.

(April 28)

Found Joy and Satisfaction

ONE day last winter, I ventured into a temple compound. As I was hesitating what to do, a woman, poor, emaciated, and clothed in rags, came out of a little, dark room of a house near. I spoke to her, and handed her a tract, and she passed on. But I could not get her out of my mind; and a few days later, I called upon her.

I found that she was a widow, and that her only means of support was sewing. I called frequently, and tried to interest her in Bible study; but she would not lay aside her work long enough to give attention to what I was saying. All that she could earn, except the very poorest living, went to the Buddhist priests at the temple, for prayers and offerings.

One day when I went to call upon her, she was not to be found. I in-

quired, but no one would tell me where she had gone. Mrs. Kuniya and I had become very much interested in this devout heathen woman, and we made her case the subject of special prayer, asking the Lord to send her to us if we could do her good, as we could not find her.

At last, one day she came to our house and then she began to attend the Bible readings, and she did not miss a meeting until she fully accepted Christianity. The Lord had impressed her that here was something which would satisfy her heart as it had never been satisfied through her offerings to the priests. I called upon her a short time ago, and found the god shelf and all the idols gone from her house. Her rags have given place to decent dress, and she is both clothed and in her right mind, and happy in the Lord. She no longer gives her money to the idle, dissolute priests, but has already begun to pay tithes to the Lord, and is earning enough to be comfortable, and is happy to have a part in the grand work of the gospel.

H. KUNIYA.

It is through the help given in the homeland that such transformations as these are possible. Shall we not esteem it a privilege to do all in our power that many more worshippers at heathen shrines may be led to rejoice in a Saviour's love!

Fourth Sabbath Reading

(April 28)

AS THE week of prayer will open on April 28, the usual missionary service programme will be dispensed with, and the reading assigned for the opening meeting of the week of prayer take its place. The offering on behalf of missions can be taken as usual.

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