

FOR LARGER LIVES.

In heaven, they say, is undisturbed and perfect peace; and yet
Along our heart-strings, even there, a tremor of regret
Must sometimes wander into pain, if memory survives—
A grief that in this good, great world we lived no larger lives.

God moves our planet gloriously among the starry spheres,
And nobler movements for our souls, through these our mortal years,
In widening orbits toward himself eternally he planned:
We creep and rust in treadmill grooves—we will not be made grand.

He sent us forth his children, of his inmost life a part,
His breath, his being, each a throb of his deep Father heart:
He shaped us in his image, suns to flood his world with day;
Alas! we stifle down his light and deaden into clay.

Meant to be living fountains—not little stagnant pools,
Stirred aimlessly from shallow depths, walled round with petty rules,
Drying away to dust at last, to him we might ascend,
And with the river of his life in crystal freshness blend.

To share his freedom—sons of God! there is no higher aim
Can kindle any human hope to an immortal flame!
It is the keenest shame of these mean, fettered lives we lead—
We choose the weights that drag us down, refusing to be freed.

Yet souls that win immortal heights unclogged, with self must move!
The only thing that we can take from earth to heaven is love!
To make us great like Thee, O God! Thy Spirit with us strive!
Enlarge our lives to take Thee in! O, give us nobler lives!

—Lucy Larcom.

ONE MAN'S ACHIEVEMENT.

The brief, but far-reaching ministry of Haggai, one of the so-called minor prophets, illustrates the tremendous influences which may be exerted by a single man when that man is sent by the Almighty on a mission, and when he sets himself directly to his task, with faith and courage. This consecrated and anointed soul had a work to do which, with its issues, was of vast importance, which was closely bound up with the progress of the kingdom of God for ages afterward; which, in its relation to the very life of the nation to which he belonged, was essential and pivotal. The merest glimpse of the times and circumstances out of which he merged will show this.

The colonists, permitted by Cyrus to return from Babylon about 536 B. C. and to begin the work of national resurrection, had entered on their work with great enthusiasm. A new life, a new opportunity, a fresh and glad beginning, had marked their first eager ventures in Jerusalem, where the foundations of the temple were relaid, and inspiring plans for re-inhabiting the city and the religious life of the nation were projected. Samaritan co-operation had been refused, and the men who offered help now became sneering and petulant foes, determined on hindering the recon-

struction of the Jewish temple. Their opposition turned out to be relentless, hateful and violent, and under its pressure the zeal of the colonists died out, their courage relaxed, and their work came to an end. The venture turned out to be simply a spurt, lasting a few weeks, and the would-be builders, discouraged, afraid, and finally absorbed in their own personal affairs, stopped the work of rebuilding the temple altogether. And this condition of affairs had now lasted fifty years—half a generation. The governor of the province was either helpless in view of the apathy of the people, or else forgetful of the project; the high priest was content to allow things to drift without concerning himself as to the religious future of the people under his care.

This is the picture before us at the juncture when Haggai came on the scene; the temple in ruins, the people listless, and stupid, and worldly; the rulers inert and blind to the duty and the opportunity of the time. The situation had become chronic, and, from a human standpoint, incurable. Obstacles which seemed insuperable opposed the people; a spirit of invincible supineness had fixed itself upon them; and by common consent the colony had settled down upon the comfortable policy which found expression in what seems to have been a proverb of the hour: "The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." The hills about the city were long ago denuded of timber; the roads to Joppa were commanded by savage foes who for years had refused to allow material for use in the new building to pass up to Jerusalem; idle dreamers had been saying for a long time: "This business should be undertaken by the King of Persia; it is too great an undertaking for this poverty-stricken colony to assume. It cannot be done."

When these details of the situation come before the historical imagination of a reader, they make clear to him the difficulties of the hour and the vastness of the task which had to be accomplished if the temple project was to be made successful. A dejected people had to be heartened; their leaders had to be roused from apathy; a way out of the perilous emergency had to be found. All this was done, with quickness and efficiency, by one man, the prophet Haggai, of whom we know almost nothing beyond the facts recorded in the book which bears his name. That book, and the work which he did, afford for him an imperishable monument.

His message was like a bugle-blast; "Will ye dwell in ceiled houses while the Lord's house lieth waste? Thus saith Jehovah: Go up into the mountain and bring in timber, and build my house!" He spoke with such sincerity, directness, force and persuasiveness that the governor immediately became penitent, the high priest confessed his long-time neglect, the people bowed in prayer, and then turned to the hill country for timber, and on every side the cry arose: "Let us rise up and build!" The spirit of one man leavened the whole people; his aim became theirs. His first short message was spoken in September; it took immediate effect. Four weeks later, when some of the old men, now almost a hundred years of age, who had seen the original building in its splendor, shook their heads in dismay and declared that the renewed temple could never be made as glorious as it was in its prime, the prophet brought another message: "Be not discouraged: the Lord hath said, I will fill this house with

glory, and the latter glory of this temple shall be greater than the former glory, and in it will I give peace!" And once more the sore and weary hearts of the colonists were strengthened and healed, and thus the work went on. Two months later he brought another brief message to them, and then his ministry as a prophet, so far as our record goes, was ended.

He was more fortunate than many of the prophets, who were doomed to see their warnings despised and their instructions set at naught. He was permitted to see his message take hold at once upon the heart and conscience of the nation; he was gladdened by the sight of immediate obedience; in three months all his messages, so far as we have any record of them, were spoken, and the work which he had embodied, and urged, and commanded, went on until four years later the capstone was brought forth with rejoicing, and the new temple, completed, beautified, enshrining the prophet's vision when he roused the supine body of colonists to their tasks, was dedicated.

This old and often neglected story brings out as forcibly as any single portion of Scripture the mighty power that is often lodged in the ministry and influence of one devoted personality. Thus God had worked in every age, and thus he works to-day. A man with a conviction and a specific work that needs to be done, and a divine impulsion within him—what difficulties can daunt him, what foes can withstand him, what barriers can hinder him? Let every man seek thus to be used by the power of the Lord God Almighty!

Is there an old church building, long neglected, to be renewed and enlarged? Is there a new one somewhere to be built? Is there an inert and worldly congregation to be aroused into spiritual activity? Is a town or a city for years given over to the rum traffic, to be redeemed from its thralldom? Is there a league chapter which has grown careless and indolent to be moved to new life? Is there a community for a decade or longer given over to selfishness and worldliness, that needs to be thrilled with fresh and stimulating ministries of cheer and zeal? In each case an obedient soul, yielding itself to God's guidance and becoming his prophetic instrument, may afford to our generation a modern instance that the Lord still has his anointed servants to carry on his work. When we consider what the rebuilding of the temple meant to Israel, and that the task was done, substantially, by one man in a few weeks, we should take fresh heart and courage in the hope that God may find in any one of us a modern Haggai, fit for a special task in an emergent hour.—*Zion's Herald*.

SWIFT TO HEAR.

The good results of the word of God depend as much on hearing as on preaching. The preacher often blames himself as the year rolls round without a harvest. The people blame the preacher, and it may be justly. But what about the hearer? The prophet seems to make salvation to depend on the right kind of hearing when he says, "Hearken diligently and your soul shall live." The apostle speaks in highest terms of the Bereans when he says: "These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, for they received the word with all readiness of mind." In the parable of the sower our Lord shows that the failure of the word to bring forth a

good harvest is due chiefly to the way in which men receive it. Those whose hearts are hard through long indulgence in sin, those whose minds are taken up by the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, the Sunday newspaper, and the approaching entertainment at the theatre, do not hear with much profit. There was a time when the church maintained that it was impossible for a deaf person to be saved, because the scripture says: "Faith cometh by hearing," and how can one have faith who cannot hear? We know that this was a gross and erroneous interpretation, but there is a kind of deafness which the Bible condemns, and which hinders the salvation of the soul. Many turn away their ears from hearing the law. "Take heed how ye hear."

CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Centuries before the birth of Christ his coming had been foretold and devout souls had looked forward to his day. Even faithful Bible students often fail to realize how much the Saviour was present in the minds of the inspired writers. Dr. A. T. Pierson has summed up in these words the Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ:

"As we examine the Old Testament, we find about six hundred predictions, more than three hundred of which centre upon the person, character and career of Jesus Christ as the Messiah. These prophecies cover the line of his descent, the time of his birth and manifestation, the place of his nativity, and all the great leading circumstances of his life, death, resurrection and ascension, with many subordinate details. These prophecies were in their complete form at least four centuries before his birth, inasmuch as both the Hebrew Scriptures and the Septuagint, or Greek translation, were both in the hands of the Jews, one about two, and the other five centuries, at least, before Christ was born. The circumstances which these prophecies describe are not only unprecedented in character, but there was no possibility, humanly speaking, of these predictions being fulfilled. In fact they were largely couched in paradoxes or seeming contradictions. God has designed to present a mystery wholly inexplicable until history proved itself the key fitted to the lock."

How much more we know of him to-day, hence, how great is our responsibility? We have not only the knowledge of him, but also his command to spread his gospel throughout the whole world. The spread of this knowledge of him is not to-day committed to a few prophets, but every Christian is held responsible for his share in the work.—*Gospel News*.

Cures Sick Stomach Quickly.

Sick stomach may be often quickly relieved and its unpleasant consequence averted by taking 30 drops of Nerviline in a little sweetened water. It instantly relieves the nausea, and by its soothing and stimulating properties calms the stomach and enables it to go on and complete the process of digestion. The action of Nerviline is simply charming, pleasant, penetrating and powerful. Druggists sell it.

Probably the most of the difficulties in trying to live the Christian life arise from attempting to half live it.—*Henry Drummond*.

Perry Davis' Painkiller.—Its effects are almost instantaneous. Cures cuts, burns, and bruises. Taken internally, cramps, diarrhoea and dysentery. Avoid substitutes. There is but one Pain-Killer, Perry Davis'.