Our Young People

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THE C. E. TOPIC—Sept. 25.

NEW COURAGE FOR NEW WORK.

Ps. 144: 1-15; Acts 28: 15.

BY AMOS R. WELLS.

One of the presidents of the London Chamber of Commerce, a man of long and eminently successful business experience, was once asked to write down the principles that, in his judgment, would ensure success. He wrote a number of sage maxims, but the first two are especially worth heeding: "Have a definite aim; go straight for it!"

If we are to accomplish anything whatever in this new year of church work upon which we are entering, it must be by means of a clear-cut purpose coupled with a determined will. A vague desire to be better and to do more will profit nothing. The accomplishing Christian must heed the stirring words of Phillip Brooks who cried: "Come, take that task of yours that you have been hesitating before, and shirking, and walking around, and on this very day lift it up and do it!"

Heaven will not help us even to do heavenly work, until we first help ourselves. Max Muller, the great student of Oriental languages, once asked a certain Hindu whether Ramkrishna, the Hindu teacher, knew sanskrit. "Yes," was the reply, "Ramkrishna was living in the jungle, and a beautiful woman coming down from heaven, taught him Sanskrit." "Nonsense," cried Muller, impolitely but sensibly. "The only way to learn Sanskrit is to get a grammar and a dictionary and go to work." And that is the only way to learn the language of heaven — do God's will.

It may not be a large work, this new work that you are to undertake for your Lord; but you can undertake it in a large spirit. I very much admire that laborer who stood outside Cologne Cathedral and said to a traveller, "Yes, it's a fine building, and took us many years to finish." "Took you!" exclaimed the traveller. "Why, what did you have to do with it?" The reply was sufficient and convincing: "I mixed the mortar, sir." Lowell's lines are as true of work for Christ as of secular employment:

No man is born into the world whose work
Is not born with him; there is always work
And tools to work withal for those who will,
And blessed are the horny hands of toil!
The busy world shoves angrily aside
The man who stands with arms akimbo set
Until occasion tells him what to do,
And he who waits to have his task marked out
Shall die and leave his errand unfulfilled.

And, finally, though your work may be small, make it as great as you can! "The real worker," declared Joseph Parker, "never says, 'How little can I do?' but always, "How much can I do?" In the Christian Endeavor Society, in the Sunday-school, and in the church, there are, even yet, sadly few ambitious souls. It is better to speak convincingly the praises of Jesus than to win cases before a jury or carry a bill through a Senate. It is better to discover new ways of reaching souls with God's truth than to discover the North Pole. It is better to win one victory over evil than to conquer the most brilliant army ever mustered.

A GIRL THAT I KNOW.

Her mother taught her to pray. She read her Bible and attended Sunday-school. She went to the village school. Her days were spent in play or work, and her nights in sleep. Thus she came to the verge of womanhood with a sound body and a pure mind.

About this time she made a visit to her cousins, girls of her own age. The first night away from home! It is often a test for young people. It was for her. The bevy of girls slept in the same room and had a jolly time together. They were all preparing to retire and she kneeled down to pray as was her wont. At once a running fire of raillery began, but she paid no attention to it.

Then one girl threw a button hook at her, another a stocking. At last she was hit between the shoulders by a light slipper. At this she lifted up her head and with calm and earnest tones said to them, "Girls, you ought to be ashamed of yourselves! I know you were taught to pray as I was. You ought to be afraid to go to sleep without prayer. I pray every night at home, and I propose to do it here." She then bowed her head, and a silence that could be felt filled the room, as one by one they crept into bed. When she lifted her head one of them was keeling, too.

She had many suitors, for her naturally fair face was made doubly attractive by the beauty of the divine life within and the sweet spirit and grace of manner born of an inward peace. A bright young collegian sued for her hand and heart. He was a model young man—like the young man who came to our Lord, and whom he loved, he lacked the same one thing. She answered him and said that she was a Christian and could not marry a man who did not love her Lord. She said that if ever she had a home of her own there must be a home altar where the husband was the high priest who ministered there. She knew how in her modest womanly way to let him know that her answer might have been different had he been qualified to take his proper place.

Within one year the young man was converted and took his place in the church with her, and they were married. It was a happy home for a few short years, when she was left a widow with little children clinging to her and wondering where papa had gone and why he did not come. She took up the burden—how heavy none can know who have not borne it—of life in loneliness, but with faith in him who is the God of the widow and the fatherless. Who can know the bitterness and burden of a widow's lot in a world of sin like this? Who can descend into the deep discouragements, describe the strong temptations to unbelief which beset the life of a lonely woman fighting against desperate odds, where every man seems anxious to take advantage of her supposed, and often real ignorance of "business methods?" But there is One who knows and has power to succor in distress. And this One has walked by her side all the way. She kept the little ones in the home nest until the necessitis of their education compelled them to leave her. But they have not left her influence or the training of other days. Taught to keep themselves clean in soul and body, they can go out from her home to be of service to the world and an honor to her.

This is no fancy picture, but a chapter out of real life. This quiet, humble life is not unlike many others all over this Christian land. Of such it shall be said in that day of final reckoning, "She hath done what she could.— *The Soul Winner.*

THE SADDLER'S CHOICE.

A wealthy man came to a poor saddler and leaving a bridle, gave orders that it should be finished by Monday.

"That is not possible."

"What nonsense! There is all day tomorrow."

"We do not work on Sunday, sir."

'Then I shall go to those who do."

"We can get it done by Tuesday."

"That will not do; put it in the carriage.'

Quietly the saddler did as he was told.

Hours afterward a neighbor said, "I thought that I would come and thank you, and tell you that I should be glad of as many more customers as you would like to send."

"I shall not send you those I can keep," said the saddler; "but I will never go against my conscience for any man nor for his money."

Weeks went by, weeks of trouble to this faithful saddler. One day a military man came to his shop. "So you are the fellow who will not work on Sunday. My friend said that you refused to do his work."

"I had no choice, sir."

"Yes, you had; you were free to choose between serving God and pleasing man, and you made your choice, and because of that I am here today. I am General Downing. I have been looking for a man on whom I could rely to execute a large government order. The moment I heard of you I made up my mind that you should have it." — *Westminster Quarterly.*

MISSIONARY POTATOES.

"I can't afford it," said John Hale, the rich farmer, when asked to give to the cause of missions. Harry, his wide-awake grandson, was grieved and indignant.

"But the poor heathen," he replied; is it not too bad that they cannot have churches and school-houses and books?"

"What do you know about the heathen," exclaimed the old man, testily. "Do you wish to give away my hard earnings? I tell you I cannot afford it."

But Harry was well posted in missionary intelligence, and day after day puzzled his curly head with plans for extracting money for the noble cause from his unwilling relative. At last, seizing an opportunity when his grandfather was in good humor over the election news, he said:

"Grandfather, if you do not feel able to give money to the missionary board, will you give a potato?"

"A potato!" ejaculated Mr. Hale, looking up from his paper.

"Yes, sir, and land enough to plant it in and what it produces for four years."

"Oh, yes!" replied the unsuspecting grandparent, settling his glasses on his calculating nose in a way that showed he was glad to escape from the lad's persecution on such cheap terms.

Harry planted the potato, and it rewarded him the first year by producing nine; these, the following year, became a peck; the next, seven and a half bushels; and when the fourth harvest came, lo! the potato had increased to seventy bushels; and, when sold, the amount realized was put with a glad heart into the treasury of the Lord. Even the aged farmer exclaimed:

"Why, I didn't feel that donation in the lesat! And Harry, I've been thinking that if there was a little missionary like you in every house, and each one got a potato, or something else as productive, for the cause, there would be quite a sum gathered."—*The Junior Herald.*

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