

November 15, 1913

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

3

Missionary Correspondence.

CHAPTER XII.

BY REV. H. C. SANDERS, M. D. A SIFTING.

"I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

Before relating what, to me, were important changes, I pause to sketch a dark picture—a near shipwreck of faith. This experience, however, taught me the folly of harboring doubts regarding matters in which God has given sufficiently clear light. One naturally shrinks from telling such an incident, but the thought that another tried one may be helped enables one to overcome one's reticence.

As the reader will have guessed, I was engaged to the daughter of the Rev. Aaron Kinney. In a word, God had led in this, as He had in other important matters. I will not give details here, probably will not later, but I was as certain that God had planned our union as I was of my conversion and call. Strange as it may seem, I came near losing my faith right in revival meetings.

A certain brother who happened to know that I anticipated making Miss Ella Kinney my helpmeet, took me for a ride one day, and improved the time by giving me some brotherly advice. I listened and listened, duly weighing all his arguments. "Africa has a deadly climate. You are strong and will likely stand it. Doubtless you are called to Africa. But Miss Kinney—her health is delicate. It is evident, therefore, that God has not called her there, as she would simply fill a premature grave, whereas her splendid talents eminently fit her for work in this land where God is using her and wishes to do so for many years to come. You could never take a woman you really love to certain death, even though she, in her ignorance or presumption, might be willing to go. Therefore you should break your engagement."

Having accepted his premise, "deadly climate," I was forced to his logical conclusions. I spoke very few words, but in thought went over and over his line of argument. I had reason to suspect this young widower had some personal end in view (at this you may smile); but that made little or no difference, as I prided myself and still do on being open to receive truth from any source. The more I reasoned the more plausible seemed the thought of my disinterested (?) friend. To break our engagement—the thought stunned me. But yet I would be honorable, and do the right, though it cost me more than life. This much was settled.

Then I began to examine and analyze my past experiences, comparing the different incidents in which I had known divine guidance. And now logic forced me to startling conclusions indeed. If I was now mistaken in my certain conviction, verified, as I had thought, by infallible proofs—if God had not led us to join hands and hearts and be His messengers among the heathen—then what about my "call?" It had been definite and certain, but no more so than the other leading. Perhaps I had been mistaken and never was called to Africa. Then my conversion—what about that? Never before had such a thought found a moment's lodgement in my mind. But now, bewildered as I was, all past experiences appeared distorted amid the dark fog of doubt. Possibly, then, it too had been a delusion.

Physical darkness, even that of the plagues of Egypt, that could be felt, was as nothing to this that now engulfed me. The misery was like that of one lost without the least indication as to one's position or way to safety. Then

came the startling thought, like a voice, "How do you know there is a God?" Like when Satan proposed that the Son of God fall down and worship him, he apparently overstepped the bounds of discretion, and was summarily dismissed; so now, when this thought flashed suddenly upon me, it revealed to me the true nature of the temptation. In my stupidity I had not recognized that I was harboring sinful doubts.

My whole nature recoiled from this last thrust. "There is a God, and He has redeemed my soul and called me to make Him known to others. And to think that I should, for even a moment, have doubted it!" Though I thus repelled the doubts as soon as I discerned, yet the seed had taken root and not easily eradicated. The whole line of thought returned, over and over again, like a defeated enemy seeking entrance to some stronghold. There was a long struggle. My judgment told me that my former faith was correct, though now it did not seem real like it had. Some question of faith has in it the element of the will. Had they ever passed through this valley they would know. "In the past I had believed in God, and that life had been a reality. If it were true then, it must still be true, and I will believe, though I do not feel the same assurance now." Thus I tried to believe with all the power of my will. My communion with God had apparently ceased, for now I had lost all sense of His presence, and pray as much as I would there was no consciousness of His presence. The Holy Spirit seemed to be grieved and to have turned away His face.

The nearest likeness I have ever drawn to this experience where for the first and last time I doubted my conversion and call, is a deep, dark and miry pit. I am at the bottom, with no apparent way of escape. Just one ray of light, a tiny star, is above me in the far distance. Then the chain of God's providence is let down to me. There are the various links; once, when I was in the light, I could see that they were all marvelously fitted and welded together. Since it was strong then, it must be able to bear my weight now, so I take a mighty grip on the end that barely reaches my upstretched hands. The strain of this uncomfortable position is very fatiguing, but I hold on by force of will, seeing only the faintly shining and far-off star of hope. Slowly, imperceptibly slow, I am lifted. How long must I hold on in this awful darkness?

Yes, for three weeks I was like one spiritually paralyzed, having no feeling whatever of the Divine Presence. Then, gradually, I was drawn out of the horrible pit and miry clay where the sunlight of God's smile broke upon my cold heart, warming it into new feeling and energy.

I never recall this dark trial without deep gratitude to God for His great deliverance. The lesson then learned has been to me a safeguard, as well as a means of helping others in similar tests. God's way is to reveal but one step at a time. He was not then ready to show me that our special field in Africa was not a "deadly climate," and that "Miss Kinney" would better endure the enervating heat than her supposedly stronger partner. He who controls our present will arrange the future, and "guide the meek in judgment."

Don't forget to consult the little label on your Highway. A large number of subscriptions expire in October, November and December.

HOW TO REACH THE CHURCH WITH THE MESSAGE.

BY REV. J. L. BRASHER, PAPER READ AT CHICAGO CONVENTION.

This is a vital theme. It suggests a Laodecean condition of things that is appalling. It presupposes that the church has not the message and further that the message can with great difficulty be gotten to the churches.

While there are thousands of laymen and preachers in the churches who have both the message and the experience, yet the aforementioned conditions largely obtain.

If holiness is a doctrine as clearly defined as justification, regeneration and adoption, then according to the testimony of thousands of the best people in the churches who attend our distinctly holiness meetings, it is not preached in the regular services of the church, but with rare exceptions.

If holiness is an experience, then candor compels us to say that to the far greater part of the church membership it is an unknown, unsought and almost unheard-of experience.

If a holiness preacher is one who preaches the doctrine clearly and urges the people to an immediate possession of the experience, then the church has not many, comparatively, on hand.

The problem of how to reach these vast aggregations with the message at once assumes giant proportions. It involves all the hindrances and obstacles in the way, as well as the different methods and aims needed for the propaganda. I will mention the following as some of the hindrances to its propagation:

- 1st. Ignorance of its doctrinal place and importance in the Christian system and of its necessity as an experience for the individual Christian.
- 2nd. Prejudice against it both inborn and acquired.
- 3rd. Indifference to vitally spiritual things characteristic of the majority in the church.
- 4th. Direct opposition to both the doctrine and experience, by a large class of both preachers and laymen.
- 5th. Mistakes of the friends of holiness both as to methods of propagation and conservation.
- 6th. The craftiness and opposition of Satan himself. These about sum up the forces of the opposition which must be overcome in order to reach the church with the message. One can readily see that the pathway to success is far from being a flowery one, and that if we succeed we shall need consummate wisdom, superb tact and the power of God. This is the situation before us. The problem is manifold, the task a single one, namely: reaching the church with the message.

Ignorance may be reduced by the same scriptural presentation of the doctrine of holiness. This is to be wrought by preaching and introduction of holiness books and periodicals among individual members of the church.

Prejudice must be reduced by sound argument and by full sample cases of the fruit of holiness. A joyful, consistent love-full witness to both men and devils.

Indifference can be greatly reduced by getting some people in every church sanctified.

Opposition must not be ignored but met on its own ground. We must contend earnestly (not bitterly) for the faith once for all delivered.

Mistakes of friends. Alas, here is where it is difficult to ward off the blows, for many unwise and hurtful things have been done in the name of holiness, but we are equal to our (Continued on page 5.)

t time
f the
and p
es eno
is erro
he ho
gly sn
f, bo
ttle br
s dur
rch,
rly of
inda-
ve d
have
rou d
th he
ensile
ed in
re
r lid
h
e es-
o e-
y ur
ch y-
m at
l, ut
t ld
d ou
er ad
ru ld
so
ng
eaily
nuly
rd
ith
ake
lay i-
of ll
ged all
et-ual
lk
ore
gh
ny
n-
sin
e-
ted
od
ted
ce
is
d
is
r
men
ult
e
nd
sed
it?
un-
ved
is
or-
n."
eds
ew
out
of
ost
gh
on
nen
is