

W. C. T. U. Column.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE.

A PAPER READ BY MRS. SAUNDERS PATTERSON AT
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When I began to look into and think about this subject, I was led to realize it was a very broad one, and all the time seeing we can't do to-day what we should have done yesterday. Seeing we live by the day and have no promise of to-morrow, as we "know not what a day may bring forth," and as we hear the great Apostle in his letter to the Galatians, saying, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men." And if that opportunity comes to-day we must be careful not to let it pass; to-morrow may be too late; we may be gone, or the one we should have helped; and if as we live each day, the day will be filled with further opportunities, the time is now, or the opportunity will be lost. "While thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone." Lost opportunity means not only loss to ourselves, but to the one or ones whom we have failed to help, but it is dishonorable to the cause of God, whose children we are, and whom we serve. We rob ourselves of the blessing the Lord is so willing to bestow—richer, better than we can ask or think—and we get busy with the cares of this life. As we are "cumbered about with so many things," opportunities pass by unnoticed—forgetting that good part that shall never be taken from us—that one thing needful. We accept the blessings that God in loving-kindness bestows, and do not realize from whence they come. And then we sometimes get to our "Kadesh-Barnea." Great opportunities present themselves through obedience and service, faith in God and His promises. We realize that the blessings or possessions God has offered us are all right, but obstacles confront us; we see giants in the way and think it utterly useless to try, and we see ourselves like "grasshoppers in our own eyes," and in other people's eyes. We turn back, forgetting "they that are with us are more than they who are against us." "If God be for us, who can be against us?" We grieve our Heavenly Father by refusing to accept by faith the blessing of his presence with and in us, joy unspeakable, feasting upon the bread of life. Yes, we turn back to our wilderness life, to feed upon the manna we loathe.

Now we turn to the other side of the question. How can we successfully, as Christians, meet these opportunities for service. We remember when our Saviour came down from the Mount of Transfiguration he found a multitude at the foot of the mountain. One came to him saying he had brought his son, who was a lunatic, to be healed and the disciples had failed to heal him. After Jesus had healed him the disciples asked why they could not cure him. Jesus told them it was because of their unbelief. Said he, "All things are possible to him that believeth." "This kind cometh not forth but by prayer and fasting." Prayer and self-denial are two of the things that are very essential. We must believe with all our heart and there must be a giving up and relying wholly upon the Lord for strength and ability, and humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God becoming all things to all men. As said the great Apostle, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"—fully consecrated to the service of the Master, set apart. Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth."

Christ formed in us the hope of glory; we love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and

strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. These are some of the equipments for service.

Now the opportunities. Prayer is one of the greatest opportunities. Prayer makes the Christian's armor bright. We have this opportunity of prayer in connection with all others; if we lack wisdom we are told to ask of God, and for courage, strength, faith and whatever we will. He asked us to pray that we enter not into temptation, "pray without ceasing, pray and faint not, pray in secret;" "ask and ye shall receive." We have so many examples of prayer coming with opportunities. "If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it." Here we are encouraged to pray for others, and we are often pressed upon to pray for some person or object. We may not just understand why we are thus called upon, but God knows and some time we'll understand; and when God says pray, pray; don't lose the opportunity. I once read of a mother telling her son, when he was leaving home, at a certain hour every day she would be praying for him. Some years later that son fell sick; his case was a very critical one; his friends thought he had only a few hours to live. When they told him, he said, "If I live till such an hour I may get better; mother will be praying then." I think if I remember right when that hour came he began to mend. No doubt his thoughts were turned toward God, and mother and son, though sundered far, "by faith could meet around one common mercy seat."

As I said at first, every day brings its opportunities. We have no time to loiter. We are on business for the King, and the King's business requires haste." There are wonderful opportunities in the home and they never cease. We haven't time to much more than touch on the home opportunities. There is the example, influence, family worship, discipline, continual prayer, pleading with God for help to guide, guard the children in the home, bring them up in fear and admonition of the Lord. All these and many more opportunities present themselves. These home principles and teachings the children carry with them wherever they go, especially the mother's influence. They go out into the world to influence someone else. A mother marked several passages in her son's Bible when he was leaving home. In course of time that son established a home. A stranger one day entered that home. Noticing the Bible on the dresser he opened it, and his attention was drawn toward the marked passages, and looked them all over. A few years later that stranger and the mother met. When they shook hands he held her hand, looked in her face and said, "You are the lady who marked those passages in your son's Bible." So we never know who may be profited by the little things we do. Little deeds of kindness, the cup of water, the tender hand-shake, the word of sympathy or cheer, the ministering of comfort to the sick and dying. A beggar met a gentleman and asked alms. The gentleman, finding he had nothing in his pocket to give, said, "I am sorry, brother, I have nothing for you." The beggar smiled and said, "Thank you, it is enough." A word of brotherly kindness, if its the best we can do, is enough. "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love." This includes the poor and needy, the suffering and sorrowing.

Now, after all this, what great opportunities confront us as a united band of Christians in whose hearts dwell the abiding presence of a living Christ. Are there not Jordans to cross, Jerichos to take? We might mention some of the Jerichos. There are Sabbath-breaking Jerichos, pleasure Jerichos, liquor Jerichos,

cigarette, moving picture or gambling Jerichos. Then there are selfish, careless, indifferent, dancing and theatre Jerichos, and the White Slave Jericho. We may find some of these in the family and even the Church—the Church, just think of it! The Bride, the Lamb's Wife, whose duty it is to keep herself unspotted from the world. "The Spirit and Bride say come." Surely God knows where Satan's seat is. "I have a few things against thee," He says. "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put ye on the whole armor." That armor the great Apostle speaks of in ph. 6: "We wrestle against principalities, powers, spiritual wickedness in high places." With this armor Paul says we are "able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Now here stands Jordan with its muddy waters and swollen banks; just beyond is Canaan and its harvest time; and these are blood-bought opportunities. "The willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land." The command is, Go, do. God is holding out blessings; the work is hindered, God is grieved. Jesus is interceding. Are we standing faithless and unbelieving or are we standing with our feet on the brink of the river, waiting for God to still the water? In this way, and this only, may we hope or expect to hear the Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

HELL—WHAT IS IT?

E. A. FERGERSON.

1. A lake of fire. Rev. 20:15.
2. A bottomless pit. Rev. 20:1.
3. A horrible tempest. Ps. 11:6.
4. Everlasting burnings. Isa. 33:14.
5. A furnace of fire. Matt. 13:41, 42.
6. Everlasting destruction. 2 Thessalonians 1:9.
7. A devouring fire. Isa. 33:14.
8. A place of torments. Luke 16:23.
9. A place of everlasting punishment. Matt. 25:46.
10. A place where people pray. Luke 16:27.
11. Where they scream for mercy. Luke 16:24.
12. Where they wail. Matt. 13:42.
13. Where they curse God. Rev. 15:11.
14. Where they can never repent. Matt. 12:32.
15. A place of filthiness. Rev. 22:10, 11.
16. A place of weeping. Matt. 8:12.
17. A place of sorrows. Ps. 18:5.
18. A place of outer darkness. Matt. 8:12.
19. A place where they have no rest. Rev. 14:11.
20. A place where they gnaw their tongues. Rev. 16:10.
21. A place of blackness of darkness forever. Jude 13.
22. A place where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Mark 9:48.
23. A place where they will be tormented with fire. Luke 16:24.
24. A place where they will be tormented with brimstone. Rev. 14:10.
25. A place where they will drink the wine of the wrath of God. Rev. 14:10.
26. A place where they do not want their loved ones to come. Luke 16:28.
27. A place where their breath will be a living flame. Isa. 33:12.
28. A place prepared for the devil and his angels. Matt. 25:41.
29. A place where they scream for one drop of water. Luke 16:24.
30. A place where there are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers. Rev. 22:15.