

## PASSION FOR SOULS.

Charles V. Fairbairn

"And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent."—Luke iv., 43.

"I must preach." Jesus felt the weight of obligation. Paul wrote, "Woe is me if I preach not." Necessity is also laid upon you and me. Our Lord's express command, "Go ye \*\*\* and preach the gospel," is emphatic. Not only this, but at night when we lie down, and just before sleep comes, we see on the wall of darkness before us the great unreached stretches of white harvest fields, no reapers, soon coming frosts, eternal loss; and it gets hold of us; tears fall, for while no voice is heard the very silence is vocal. It is a call. Then at times a voice does rise and the garb betrays the speaker's nationality as he calls "Come over into Macedonia and help us." *Dear one, is this nothing to you?*

Not only are those outward calls, but to the man filled with the Holy Ghost there is an ever-impelling inward urge. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel." "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: \*\*\* and he taught in their synagogues." "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." "Brother, can you have the Spirit and not feel the inward urge?"

"I must preach: for therefore am I sent," said Jesus. To His Father he said: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." Therefore you and I must preach; for therefore are we sent.

Wesley had this passion for souls. Coke and Asbury had it. General Booth has it. On what grounds can any child of God justify exemption from feeling it? Said John Smith, one of the early Wesleyan preachers, "I am a broken-hearted man; not for myself, but on account of others, God has given me such a sight of the value of souls that I cannot live if they are not saved. Oh, give me souls, or else I die!"

We can see many possible reasons for lack of the passion for souls; but we notice only a few.

(1) *Possibly we do not realize, as much as we profess to realize, the awfulness of being a LOST SOUL.* We act as if hell is a place of comfort; eternity but a watch in the night; or as if we did not care. If to be lost in eternity's night is so awful, so horrible, why are we so easy? So quiet? So composed? Why are we not, oh, so keen to "rescue the perishing, care for the dying; and snatch them in pity from sin and the grave?"

(2) *Possibly we do not find salvation such a joy-inspiring boon after all.* It would appear from our actions that it is nothing so wonderful after all; nothing worth spreading; nothing worth offering; nothing worth recommending. If it is really so sweet, so good, so marvellous, why do the multitudes who graze shoulders with us in passing, so seldom hear us, "Come thou with us and we will do thee good."

(3) *Possibly the inward urge is wanting; we do enjoy full possession of, and by, the Spirit of the Master.* We have power to shout, leap for joy, demonstrate in various ways; but as for power and ambition to be up and doing for God, it is too largely a minus quantity. Where today are the "the greater works than these," promised by Jesus? Where is the dynamite of Acts i:8 today? What kind of "Book of the Acts" is the church of today writing? *Answer, brother.* We submit that the road for the fullness of the Spir-

it's coming is not open. There is a lack of vital consecration, real self-denial, the spirit of "a living sacrifice." You dispute this, do you? Al-right, let us test this, honestly now. Tonight, in your room, on your knees before God, take paper and pencil and write at the top: "This year, I have for Jesus' sake, denied myself of—", then begin (1), (2), (3), (4), and see how far down the list you can go. Oh, the self-life is strong. Oh, we are so self-centred even with our lofty professions of holiness. Is the Book true? It is! Then what did our Lord mean when he said that "unless we deny ourselves and take up our cross we cannot be His disciples."

Is there no remedy for our passionless apathetic, soul-stagnant condition? Yes, bless God, there is a Balm-in-Gilead. The health of the daughter of my people can be recovered. We must have a mighty awakening such as only the Holy Ghost can bring. We must have the falling, melting, all-purging, moulding, reconstructing, flaming fire of another Pentecost.

"Oh that in me the sacred fire might now begin to glow."

"Oh that it now from heaven might fall." Come, Great Spirit, come. Enable me to see and realize the lost condition of folks around me. Enhance to me thy "so great salvation" until its beauties I must tell. Inspire us, please, to such a self-slaying, self-effacing willingness, as pilgrims, probationers in the ministry, and regular preachers, that we will present our bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable unto God. Give us the real "give-up" and "do-without" spirit. Impart to us power, not to talk, but power to be and do. Amen and Amen.

"Pray till the victory comes."  
CHARLES V. FAIRBAIRN  
Kingston, Ontario.

## OBITUARY

Charles Warren Peabody

At Fairfield, Maine, after a lingering illness, Chas. W. Peabody passed from this life Tuesday, December 7th, aged twenty-three years. He was a very devoted son and brother and a highly respected young man. He leaves to mourn his mother, Mrs. Malcolm Lowell; three sisters—Mrs. Ralph Wilcox, of Grand Manan, Lizzie and Rhena at home; also one brother, Elmer.

The funeral service was held from the Reformed Baptist Church at Beals. The service was conducted by Rev. F. A. Watson, assisted by Rev. Wm. Brewster. Our sympathy to those who sorrow.  
F. A. W.

Frederick Lee

Mr. Frederick Lee, son of the widow, Mrs. Hannah Lee, of Union street, passed away at the home of his mother, December 9th last, at the age of 45 years. Mr. Lee, who was stopping with his mother, seemed well and strong. He gave no complaints of being sick when he retired to bed. The next morning his mother called him; as he gave her no answer, she went to his room and discovered that he had passed away during the night. He leaves to mourn besides his mother, four sisters—Emma, Mrs. Arthur Allen, Mrs. Harry Lunn, Mrs. Walter Millen; and three brothers—William, in N. H.; Clarence and Howard at home. The funeral service was held at his mother's, conducted by the writer. Our prayers and sympathy is extended to the bereaved ones.  
C. R. Hagerman.

God's love is not rounded out until I respond to it.—Maltbie D. Babcock.

## WAYSIDE CONVERSIONS

By Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.

That which adds romantic interest to the life of every earnest worker for Christ is the opportunity which ever and anon presents itself to win souls. Suddenly, without any preparation, there springs up from the roadside of life one of the rarest privileges in all one's experience. It was so in the life of Jesus. He went walking by the seaside and found the two young men mending their nets. He had a little talk with them, saw the time to win them, and led them away after Him forever. Going down the street He sees a young taxgatherer at his desk. He knows that this young man is restless and uneasy, and now is the time to win him to better things. Christ steps across the street, has a little talk with him, and when it is over Matthew closes up his business, and the next we hear of him he is giving a dinner in honor of Jesus.

The life of Jesus was full of such experiences. It was at the close of a weary and dusty day that He was waiting outside of Samaria when the sinful woman with her water-pot, and through the simple incident of asking for a drink of water Christ got hold of her heart and not only won her to Himself, but also won a great multitude in that town. Now we are to be like our Lord. Our lives may be romantic and abound in these unique and beautiful victories if, like Jesus, we are ever on the alert to seize hold of the passing opportunity. I remember well one morning in a certain city where I was pastor and was in the midst of a great revival. Every day I was preparing a sermon for delivery the same evening, and God was greatly blessing the work. Many people were being converted. One morning while I was in my study preparing the sermon for that night's meeting my wife came to the study and told me that a messenger had come from a family whose name was entirely unknown to me, asking if I could go to the house to see a young woman who was sick. I sent word that I would go a little later in the morning, and went back to my sermon. When the sermon was completed I went to make the visit.

Arriving at the home I found that none of the family were members of any church, and though some of them had been to hear me preach I had up to this time had no knowledge of them whatever. The young woman who had sent for me was about twenty years old and was very ill with consumption. It was evident that she would never leave her room again until she left it for the grave. She had been shut in there, sick for five months, and though none of the rest of the family were Christians, she had in some way that I do not now remember found the Lord.

I was met at the door by the mother, and ushered into a very pleasant room. I sat for a while at the bedside of the young lady and talked with her and the mother, first about the bright day, about the sunshine coming into the sick room, and such commonplace matters, until, incidentally, I turned to the mother and asked her if she was a Christian. She replied that she was not. I found, however, that she had been hopefully converted

when she was a young girl living on a farm in Pennsylvania, but for some reason she had not joined the church, and as is very usual in cases where people try to live a Christian life outside of the Church, she had failed, and now for many years had lived an entirely worldly life. She said she had wholly given up the idea that she would ever be a Christian; that she had remarked only the other day to a friend that she was certain if she were to die she should be lost, and that she sometimes thought the day of grace had passed for her.

You may well imagine that by this time I was thoroughly aroused. It seemed to me an awful thing to look upon that sick young woman who was only waiting there for the angel of death in the presence of a mother who could not enter into any spiritual fellowship or communion with her; and so, with my heart uplifted to God, I set myself deliberately to win the mother to Christ then and there. I urged what God says in His book—that he is married to the backslider. I tried to make her see the providential opportunity which was here presented for her to renew her covenant of grace with the Lord.

She was so unresponsive at first that, after talking with her ten or fifteen minutes, I came to the very edge of giving up. How many times we fail that way when we are on the very edge of success. I honestly believe that more preachers fail of being successful evangelists and soul-winners in their pastorates because they gave way too quick, both in the following up a public appeal and in persistently pursuing a private conversation, than for any other one reason. But as I was just about to give up, the thought suddenly possessed me that perhaps this was the woman's last call—if I could not win her there beside her daughter's sick bed what hope was there that any one could ever win her? This thought gave me new energy, and I pursued the conversation not only with unabated but with increased resolution. The result was that at the close of a half-hour her heart was broken with deep conviction, and, sobbing and crying out to God for mercy, she knelt with me beside her daughter's bed, and while I prayed for her she gave herself unreservedly up to God, and found forgiveness and peace in Christ.

A few moments after we had risen from our knees the mother went and called in her sister, who was visiting her from her old home in Pennsylvania, and a younger daughter, thirteen years of age. Then as the mother went away from the room again for a moment, the daughter looked into my face, and with a radiance like that which shone in the face of Saint Stephen when his murderers bore testimony that it was as "the face of an angel," she said, "Oh, isn't this glorious! I have been lying here praying for this, night and day, for so many weeks." Thus I had a vision, a revelation, and I knew it was in answer to this daughter's prayers that salvation was come to this house.

But the story is not yet complete. I turned from the bedside to see standing there the aunt, whose face was red with weeping, and I said to her, "Are you a

Christian?" And she answered, "No." And then I entered upon a new conversation. She frankly confessed that she had long desired to be a Christian, but there were so many things in the way—idols, she said, that she could never give up. But, making little of these things, I began to tell of her sister's conversion before she had come into the room, and while I was telling her that story, and she was listening with great astonishment and evident emotion, the sister herself re-entered the room and came up, and kissed her, and they sat and cried together.

Leaving the two women together for a moment, feeling sure the problem would work itself out best that way, I turned my attention to the little girl, a beautiful child of thirteen, and I saw by her eyes that the battle was won there before I began. Her heart opened to the Saviour as naturally as a flower opens to the sun on a summer's morning. Then we had another season of prayer, the aunt and the young girl praying for themselves, and the mother and the sick daughter and myself pleading with God for them, until they came to trust the Lord Jesus Christ and to rejoice in their faith in Him.

I was an hour and a quarter in that house. I had never been in it before; though two of them had heard me preach. I had never even known their names or had any personal communication with them whatever. In that hour and a quarter, through God's great grace and mercy, three souls had turned away from sin and found peace in trusting the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. What a blessed wayside opportunity was that! But to take advantage of such opportunities we must live in the spirit of them. If I had been in a cold and heavy mood, and had gone to do my work in a spirit of formality, I could have visited that sick girl and gone and away and done nothing else for that house. And yet those souls were waiting for somebody to capture them for the divine Lord. We need to be on the alert for the wayside opportunities.

## THE HORRORS OF HEATHENISM.

(By H. Paul Sanders, Mankaiana, Swaziland.)

"I would not have done it myself, in fact I refused several times, but he threatened me, saying he would cause lightning to strike me and burn my heart out if I did not. . . . Yes, he is a powerful witch-doctor, and I believe he would do as he said."

And because she believed him, right down to the bottom of her darkened superstitious heart, the poor heathen woman who made the above statement in court assisted in the kidnapping of an innocent little native boy, five or six years old, knowing that he was to be murdered in cold blood. And murdered he was, but not until after eight days of suffering, without food or water, in a dark cave, where the witch-doctor hid him, whilst the sorrowing friends and distracted parents searched the countryside without success.

The story is an awful one in the fullest sense of the word! The child was taken from the cave, almost unconscious,

to a spot where the three witch-doctors killed it by cutting its throat, and then proceeded to cut up the body, each one securing a share. For this was what they wanted, parts of the body as medicine or charms. This whole tragedy the woman was compelled to witness; they told her that she must be with them throughout so that, being thereby implicated, she would be sure not to turn on them as informer.

Such are the depths of the heathen darkness all around us, and I feel sure that our Swazi natives, with very few exceptions, believe that parts of the human body ground up with other charms and mixed with their seed at planting time, ensure a plenteous harvest, just in the same way as we should expect one if we used the most up-to-date fertilizers and had good rains.

Two such cases of child murder for sacrifice have come to light recently in this district, the last victim being the little boy who used to bring our milk. Poor little chap, his own uncle struck the first cruel blow, and, according to reports, there are murders of this sort every year! I think we often wonder why salvation gains headway so slowly, but is it any wonder, when we consider the depths from which these natives have to be lifted?

It is surely a bigger victory for a witch-doctor to be saved than for an ordinary native, and, praise God, two have lately turned to Him, one an old man living near here, and the other, a woman, in our evangelist Izak's section. The man is very old, but is really in earnest and has given up beer and snuff, things which mean a lot to these older people. The woman has held out against the light for years, but has apparently not had the success she expected in the service of her "hard master," and now she sees that she is a lost soul and wants to be saved.

Only yesterday I was much interested in hearing the history of Johan Meibi, one of our strongest Christian men and a great help spiritually in the work. When quite young, the "spirits came upon him" and he started to be a witch-doctor, but he was so young that his people objected and sent him away from home. Then he became a Christian, but the spirits troubled him a great deal. He would creep out at night, go off to the hills and wander there till late the next day.

Old Izak watched him and caught him several times, and after a struggle would bring him back and then pray with him, till finally one night all the people of the kraal came into the hut, which was so crowded that they had to stand. Izak told them that they could pray standing, and this they did—right through till daylight—and then Johan fell unconscious and looked as though he were dying. After a time he came too, but was utterly weak. For, as Izak puts it, "Those who had been his strength had left him."

From that day, however, the spirits have never returned, and today he is a great help in the work, holding services when his brother Moses, the evangelist, is elsewhere, and praying with the sick. Please pray that the two witch-doctors who have lately come to God may go on to follow in Johan's steps.—South African Pioneer.