

WHO RUNS THE ENGINE?

By Rev. M. E. Lewis
A Study in Cooperation, with an apology to Thomas F. Opie's "Who Flies the Kite?"

"Who runs the engine?"

"I," said the engineer; "I run it without fear!"

"I run the engine."

Yes, the engineer runs the engine. With his hand upon the throttle and his eye upon the rail it is a useable medium of service. But with no steam in the boiler the engineer could pull the throttle wide and yet the engine would not move.

"Who runs the engine?"

"I," said the steam; "I make her beam!"

"I run the engine."

Steam is power; but with no boiler with its steel ribs to hold its two hundred pounds' compression the steam would be altogether useless so far as locomotive practice is concerned. It would be only a thin vapor escaping into nothingness.

"Who runs the engine?"

"I," said the fire; "I make the 'Flyer!'"

"I run the engine."

"Give me fire enough!" cried Bernard Balissy, "and these pigments will become indelibly fixed upon this china." But without pigments and china Balissy could have held fire and heat to excel the fiery geological ages, and yet his efforts would have been in vain. Fire in the engine's firebox noy, and it couldn't move from the roundhouse.

"Who runs the engine?"

"I," said the water; "I make her hotter!"

"I run the engine."

But have you not exaggerated? You will have to undergo a marvelous change before you can make such a boast. In fact, your name will be "Steam" instead of "Water" before you can make her hotter.

"Who runs the engine?"

"I," said the coal; "I make the goal!"

"I run the engine."

But "self-praise is half scandal," as the old proverb states. What could the coal do without stored-up light in its bosom from the sun, possibly, for some millions of years. Really, it is the light energy in the coal that gives it potency. And then if the tender is full of coal it takes a fireman or stoker to get it into the firebox. It is simply amazing how much depends upon co-operation when it is considered from this standpoint.

"Who runs the engine?"

"I," said the wheel; "I track the steel!"

"I run the engine."

Fine thought by the wheel, but what could it do without the track. Then the ore all the way from Lake Superior, into the blasting furnace, into the puddling mill, through rolls and refining processes before it is a track to lay across the ties, or a wheel to hum and drone on the track. And again, what could the big drive-wheels do without its side-rods, its cross-heads, its valves and valve-gears, its pistons and cylinders, the steam-pipes, the smoke-stack, and so on. It seems the wheels are most dependent than all.

"Who runs the engine?"

"They all run the engine,

One in many and many in one."

The lesson of cooperation as taught in this story was taught by St. Paul, though in a different figure. He said, "For as the body is one, the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." (Read the entire twelfth chapter of I. Corinthians).—Free Methodist.

THE VISION THAT MADE A PROPHET.

By Rev. C. V. Fairbairn

Reading the sixth chapter of Isaiah, we learn of a great revelation given to the prophet. A revelation of coming events? No! A far more important revelation than that. It was the revelation of "the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train [filling] the temple." He saw "the King, the Lord of hosts." He saw "the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God." A prophet may have a vision of future events, but this was the vision that makes a prophet. Moses, Gideon, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Daniel, Joel, Habakkuk, Saul of Tarsus—any true prophet must have a revelation of the Holy One before he is fit to reveal for the Holy One.

Some things may be dispensed with in the making of a prophet, but not this prophet-making revelation. Isaiah was a potential prophet, but Isaiah the cultured, the courtier of Uzziah, the politician, the one in trouble about the future of the kingdom ever since Uzziah's sin, affliction and isolation, the otherwise complacent Isaiah—what hope had God that such should ever carry His messages? Nor could man reach him. God must reach him. And, beloved, there are millions whom sermons, exhortations, counsellings, much less scoldings, will never reach. God must give them a revelation unveiling His holiness; that, and that alone, will start the processes of cure. The vision, humanly speaking, unmanned Isaiah. He lost his complacency. Like Job, he could have cried, "O Lord, I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." From his lips burst forth his bitter cry of sin and confession, "Woe is me! I am undone."

But, beloved, notice the quickness of the divine response. And why not? God, wanting Isaiah for a prophet, gave him this very vision to let him see his uncleanness, so he could confess it, so he could be purged of it, so that once purged he might be a real, fire-baptized prophet of the Lord. I imagine the telling of it takes much longer than the experiencing of it. Haste is written all over the inspired record as though the Lord, to all practical purposes, said, "Seraphim, there's a man in distress. He has just caught a glimpse of my holiness, his own uncleanness, the uncleanness of his people. He is crying out in despair. He feels undone. Get those tongs. Hurry with that live coal. Touch those lips. Quickly, quickly, purge him clean. Speak him clean."

Now comes a second revelation. Since the prophet is purged of his iniquity, he has new eyes, he has new ears. Around him all his lifetime had lain the needy fields. But he hadn't seen. He hadn't heard. Like multitudes today, of the earth earthy, he was all eyes for the political situation of his country—Uzziah had been smitten, the pillar of Judah's hope had fallen—yet he saw not the more dreadful spiritual depression that held his people in its iron grip. But now his eyes have seen the true King of Judah, the true pillar of hope for national greatness, the Holy One of Israel. He had felt fit to be courtier to Uzziah, but at once he saw he was not fit to be a follower of such a God. Hence the cry. Hence the cleansing. And now he has new eyes. And new ears. He sees the spiritual desolation. It surpasses the political hopelessness. He hears a

call, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Humbled by the previous revelation, cleansed of all carnal blindness, feeling willing, obedient, ready consecrated to the task, consecrated to stick to his task till the cities are desolate and the houses uninhabited, the erstwhile mourning politician becomes a soul yielded to the Holy One and cries back to heaven, "Here am I; send me!" He was now God's "Amen" witness. It was "Amen" to the whole will of God. Here was passivity passing into the control of divine Omnipotence. It was to be henceforth "Amen" to God's call, "Amen" to God's message, "Amen" to His mission, "Amen" to divine success, though man might call it failure. One might ask, "What's become of our party leader?" "Why," replies the other, "he's thrown away all his prospects. He's turned holiness preacher." Let them talk; it's "Amen" to all the will of God. And, beloved, once Isaiah, or you, or I have that complete, heart-deep "Amen" settled, it is then up to God to use as He wills, to give what success He wills; it is all up to God.

What if Isaiah had undertaken the work without this revelation of God? Of course the thought is preposterous! But what if he had? Wasn't he cultured? Didn't he know his people? For that day was he not well equipped for the task?

Let us answer this way. Two young men were ordained to the ministry; one had only a very ordinary preparation for the ministry, the other had received a full college course. They were sent by the same conference to their fields. The first, feeling his utter insufficiency for the work, and seeing his privilege, went down before the Lord and sought and obtained the mighty baptism with the Holy Ghost. The other was humanly prepared and felt no such need. At the end of one year, the first reported four hundred accessions to his church; the other reported one, and she was a young lady who had been saved at a city mission but preferred to join the church of her parents, where this young man chanced to be pastor. Oh, the Lord knew what He was doing when He first cleansed and then sent His prophet. God undertook Isaiah's case. He gave him that humbling vision. He brought forth that cry of confession from his lips. He answered that cry with the touch of fire. He made him fit for the task ahead. He gave him grace to face the work, grace for the work, and grace to be faithful and endure in the work. Thank the Lord! It might be to the point here to note what Bishop W. T. Hogue, in "The Holy Spirit—A Study," says: "The successful minister of Christ must be a Spirit-called, Spirit-filled, Spirit-illumined, Spirit-guided, Spirit-empowered man. Given these qualifications, with or without the culture of the schools, the minister of God can bid defiance to the oppositions of earth and hell, and in spite of either or both can proceed to the accomplishment of great things in the interest of the kingdom of God." God still fits, and calls, and empowers His Isaiahs to the work.

Oh, to catch the vision! Oh, for that revelation, that prophet-making revelation; for the field today needs men of God's fitting, God's sending, and God's empowering for the work! Oh, to catch the vision!—The Free Methodist.

All science begins in wonder and ends in wonder, but the first is the wonder of ignorance, the last that of adoration.—Coleridge.