

THE POWER OF THE PRINTED PAGE

The printing and distributing of godly literature has done immeasurable good and has won more souls for the Master than anyone realizes.

Someone has said that in scattering divine literature we liberate thistledown bearing precious seed, which, blown by the winds of the Spirit, floats all over the world. The printed page reaches many that could not be reached in any other way. It speaks long after the one who has written or distributed it has gone to his reward.

More interesting than any fiction or fairy tale is the true story of the spread of the gospel through the printed word. We hear many almost unbelievable accounts of this work. Sir Bartle Frere while travelling in India discovered a small town where idol shrines and temples were empty, but the people had a Christian faith. He learned that some years previous a copy of a portion of the Gospel and some tracts were discovered in the pocket of an old garment which had been given to one of the townsfolk by an English resident. This proved that the entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

Four copies of Hastings lecture on the inspiration of the Bible were given to four infidels at different times. All four were converted and became ministers of the Gospel in four different denominations.

One little leaflet in the hands of a good woman did a marvelous work of grace. She gave the tract to an actor, George Lorimer, who was led by it to attend church where he was converted. Later he became pastor of Tremont Temple, Boston. Through his influence, Russel Conwell was also led into the ministry. Think of what the world and the work of God would have missed had not these two notable preachers come under the power of the Gospel!

It is said that Luther wrote a pamphlet on Galatians which, falling into the hands of John Bunyan, was the means of his conversion. When we consider that the one hundred and thirty-fifth translation of Bunyan's immortal "Pilgrim's Progress" has been issued we get a faint conception of the good that Bunyan's book has rendered during the years.

While lying in the hospital a young Frenchman wounded at the siege of St. Quentin noticed a tract lying on his bed. He read it and was so deeply impressed that he was converted. His monument may be seen before the Church of the Consistory in Paris, and he is depicted as standing with a Bible in his hands. He was Admiral Coligny, the leader of the Reformation in France. The tract continued to do good work. It was read by Coligny's nurse, a Sister of Mercy, who penitently placed it in the hands of the Lady Abbess, and strange as it may seem, she also was converted by it. She fled from France to Palestine, where she met a young Hollander and became his wife. This Hollander was William of Orange, who became the champion of liberty and Protestantism in the Netherlands, and who influenced the whole continent of Europe.

Leigh Richmond was giving out tracts when the receiver tore his in two and threw it on the ground. The wind carried the pieces over a hedge into a hayfield where it was picked up by one of the workers, who read it to his companions. He carefully fastened the broken pieces of paper together with a thread and by prayer and meditation on the tract he gave his life to God and became a tract distributor him-

self. In a year three of his companions also became Christian workers.

It is not strange that the written Word can accomplish such great results when we realize that God is behind it. When followed by the immeasurable power of prayer it can indeed work miracles. It can enter places where the minister or Christian would not be allowed. It is stated that more than 150,000,000 copies of Spurgeon's sermons have been put into circulation.

A Christian woman in Toronto, Canada, who tries to make use of every possible opportunity to spread the Gospel, was doing the family washing in the basement when she heard a ring at the back door. She left her work to answer the door. As she ascended the stairs she was singing one of her favorite hymns. Opening the door, she saw a Jew, who occasionally came to her door to ask if she had anything to sell. This time, however, before making the usual query he said, "What makes you so happy, you sing?" She smiled as she answered, "I am singing because I am so happy that I am a Christian; Christ makes me happy." She then went away and came back with a copy of Matthew in Yiddish, and handing it to the Jew, she asked him to read it.

A few days after this he again came to her door. This time he had with him a Jew who had injured his hand.

"I brought my friend to see you. I thought if you were a Christian you would bind up his sore hand."

"Of course I will," said the Christian as she welcomed the two men into her kitchen. She brought a basin of warm water with which she gently washed the wound and then applied a healing ointment, after which she bound up the sore hand. In speaking of the incident to a friend, she said, "I did not mind doing it for I felt all the time as if I were doing it for my Lord Himself."

Some weeks later this woman and her husband were walking along the street when she heard a cart rattling and a man called out, "My friend, I read the Book you gave me." At once she recognized the man to whom she had given the copy of Matthew in Yiddish. Nothing more was said, except that her husband teased her, declaring that if this was typical of the friends with whom she was associating, he would have to disown her. Weeks passed and one day she met the Jew on the street. He was dressed so differently that at first she scarcely recognized him. "I have quit the rag and bottle business" he said. "I now have a clothing store and I would like to have you come to my store and select a dress, as I wish to give you a present of it."

"That is so kind of you, but I could not think of accepting such a gift."

"Why not?" he said, "I am so grateful to you for giving me that copy of Matthew. I read and reread it, and against my will I was forced to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, so I have taken Him for my Saviour."

—Gospel Herald.

THE RIGHT AND WRONG WAY TO REPROVE

By the late Rev. E. E. Shelhamer

"Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour and not suffer sin upon him" (Lev. 19:17). Here is a direct command to rebuke sin wherever it is found. But in so doing great wisdom is needed. As a rule when one sees the need of giving a reproof, the tendency is to do so in a harsh manner. In fact, it requires more or

less severity with some in order to get good results.

Our Lord sets the right example in the way He reproved the five churches of Asia. He first commends their good qualities, then gives the needed rebuke. Oh, that we could always do this! Paul (the pattern saint), also shows us the proper method. He had a difficult task in the "daily care of all the churches." He had a fine assistant in the person of young Timothy, and told him to "Reprove, Rebuke and Exhort with all Longsuffering." What a commission!

When writing to the Corinthian Church, he (Paul) says, "I write to them which heretofore have sinned and to all other, that if I come again, I will not spare." He evidently meant that he would reprove severely. And this was the same Apostle who, on another occasion, wrote to the same church the great chapter on Love. He was not only a great theologian, but a fiery exhorter as well.

Three Groups to Consider

Listen to him: I Thess. 5:14! "Now we exhort you brethren: Warn them that are unruly." It may have been a military scene, but the same method could apply to a home or a company of believers. Here are three types of soldiers: The first type are bold and patriotic. They would die for the right. But they are loud and naturally self-willed. They are anxious to get into the fight, even if they break rank. The Captain must quickly sense the situation and give them liberty, but not too much of it. They must be guided and held with a firm hand; they must be "warned."

Second, "Comfort the feeble-minded." Here is another type, just as loyal and fearless; but because of "shell shock," or some other harrowing experience, their minds are affected. Old battle scenes come up and, for the time being, they become rattled and unreliable. Now this same Captain (or pastor) must use wisdom and comfort rather than condemn. He must suddenly change his looks and tone of voice. This group could not stand to be threatened. They need sympathy, even if for the moment they hide behind trees. God bless the wise leader!

Third, "Support the weak." Here is still another class, not feeble in mind, but in body. They are underfed and overworked. Long marches have given them sore feet and weakened backs. The wise leader will not let them lie by the road side, but by example support and carry their heavy burdens. And, in addition to giving three different commands (in as many minutes), he must be "patient" while doing so. This all-around leader must not be loud-mouthed nor scold, but keep his poise and dignity. He feels that the main qualification of leadership is to keep calm when things are at the snapping point. How sad, then, to see a leader (whether in the home, pulpit, or committee room) lose his balance and, in a fit of temper, threaten to resign. Oh, that he might find a corner and stay there till all rashness and other unholy manifestations are consumed.

A LITTLE PRAYER

Day by day,
Dear Lord, of Thee
Three things I pray:
To see Thee more clearly,
Love Thee more dearly,
Follow Thee more nearly
Day by day.