

## Family and Fireside.

### The Real Difficulty.

It takes seventeen United Presbyterians a whole year, on the average, to bring one person to Christ. At least that was the proportion last year. One hundred and nineteen thousand members of the Church added less than seven thousand to their number on profession of faith. What is the explanation? Is it so very difficult to lead people to become Christians that seventeen earnest ambassadors of Christ have to work for twelve months to lead one to decision? No, the explanation lies in another direction. Investigation would show that nearly every one of those who professed faith in Christ last year, did so as the result of some one person's influence and appeal. It is therefore practically certain that sixteen out of seventeen of our members did not succeed in bringing anyone to Christ last year. There is still a more serious question, How many of them made a serious, personal effort to do so? If we value Christ at his real worth, and love Him supremely, can we fail to urge others to come to Him? He who gives himself to the work of saving others, will also give gladly and generously of his money for the salvation of those whom he cannot reach personally. No amount of giving of money can compensate for the failure to give ourselves to Christ's work. Our greatest need is for an overwhelming sense of personal obligation, as disciples and ambassadors of Christ.—Ways and Means Committee, U. P. Church.

### The Point of View.

As a rubber-tire coach was being driven rapidly along the street a boy, with the carelessness of youth, came skipping across the asphalt pavement. The driver hallooed; but the boy, who was looking back over his shoulder, failed to heed, and in an instant was under the horses' feet. He escaped the iron-shod hoofs, but the front wheel of the vehicle passed over his left leg. Fortunately he had rolled out of danger before the rear wheel had time to reach the injured member.

A crowd of anxious sympathizers gathered around the boy, who limping to the curb-stone, sat down nursing his leg.

"You're all right, my boy," said one reassuringly. "You are a brave boy," said another, patting him on the shoulder, "you never even whimpered." A burly man who came up puffing and swinging his arms, blurted out, "Never touched him." "Why it did touch him," replied another, "I saw it run right over his leg." "You're mistaken, sir," said the burly man, "I was right in line—it missed him by three inches."

And the two men went off down the street each contending for the truth of

his assertion, but neither able to convince the other. Nevertheless, both were witnessing to what they saw, and would have given the same testimony under oath. The trouble was, that one had been watching the front wheel, and had seen it run over the unfortunate limb, while the other had had his eyes fixed on the rear wheel which, as he said, had missed the boy's leg by three inches.

The incident illustrates not only the futility of most disputes, but also the origin of most bigotry. We have no patience with our neighbor's obtuseness and often think him insincere; when if we could but occupy his view-point, we would at once adopt his opinion. Truth is many-sided, and no man has ever seen the whole of it, or ever will. It behooves us, therefore, to be modest in asserting our own opinions and tolerant in judging the opinions of others.—Prof. W. T. Hewetson.

### Force of Character.

Some traveling men were sitting on the veranda of a country hotel one Sabbath morning, when one suggested, "Suppose we get up a little game of whist."

"I don't think the landlord would like it to-day," replied another; and the matter was dropped.

What was it in this instance that prevented the desecration of the Sabbath? It was certainly not the presence of the landlord, for he was within. Nor was it any rule or remonstrance that had come from him, for he had made none.

He was known, however, to be a member of church, and undoubtedly it was his Christian character that had spoiled the game of whist.

Character is spirit, and acts whether the body it inhabits be present or absent.

Strong characters rule weaker ones, not by strength nor yet by wit, but by that occult power which resides in the human soul. President Roosevelt never uttered a nobler sentiment than when he said, "Bodily vigor is good, and vigor of mind is better; but far above both is character."—Prof. Hewetson.

### The Theft of the Inner Life.

This inner life is a tremendous reality. Its very invisibility emphasizes the realness of the reality. It is one of the richest heritages of the child of God. The outer life is only the scaffolding of the building. It is only the husk or shell. The inner life is the real building. It is the germ-hiding kernel.

All moral and spiritual defeats are due to a vitiation of the inner life. The withering, blasting, and uprooting of the soul's choice plants are never accomplished through the forces of the outer life. The work begins within.

No man or woman with a sweet, healthy inner life can fail of success. Storms may

howl and the earth may quake, but there is something within that preserves the calm eternal and holds every whirling star of experience within its proper orbit.

The inner life is fed by the waters of the Infinite and warmed by the beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

How can we possess the rich, powerful inner life when body, mind, and soul are constantly exercising their energies upon the van, perishing things of earth? We must take time to cultivate the unseen fields of the soul. We must constantly stand face to face with God, drink in the strength of his nature and the inspiration of his presence. If we do not, the inner life must perish. Prayer, meditation, reading—these are channels through which God pours his golden, vitalizing streams into the inner life.

The saddest moment in life to a man or woman is when there is a discovery that the inner life is gone and only the outer shell is left. Yet the inner life goes, gradually and secretly. No one has ever been robbed of this priceless possession. It has been a theft in every case.

Let us be watchful. There are so many thieves to rob us of our dearest possession. Let us remember that as long as God is in this inner life there is security there, and that no thief has ever yet been able to break the locks of prayer and trust and divine wisdom.—Raleigh Christian Advocate.

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